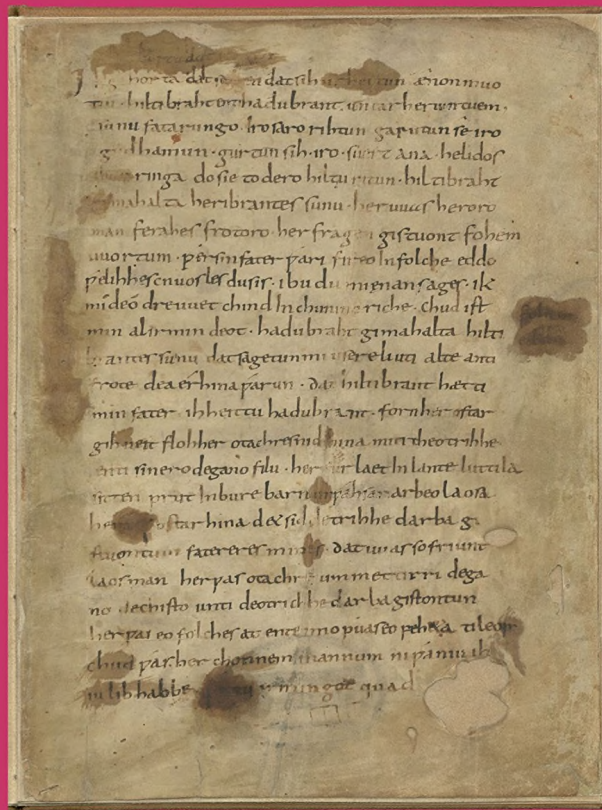




Writing the Barbarian Past

Studies in Early Medieval Historical Narrative

Shami Ghosh

BRILL

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

Writing the Barbarian Past

Brill's Series on the Early Middle Ages

CONTINUATION OF THE TRANSFORMATION
OF THE ROMAN WORLD

Managing Editor

Bonnie Effros (*University of Florida*)

Editorial Board

Deborah Deliyannis (*Indiana University*)

Edward James (*University College Dublin*)

Walter Pohl (*Austrian Academy of Sciences*)

VOLUME 24

The titles published in this series are listed at brill.com/bsem

Writing the Barbarian Past

Studies in Early Medieval Historical Narrative

By

Shami Ghosh



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Cover Illustration: *Hildebrandslied. Origenes, lat. Liber Sapientiae. Liber Iesu filii Sirach*. Shelf mark: 2° Ms. theol. 54, fol. 1r. With kind permission of the University Library of Kassel. Landesbibliothek und Murhardsche Bibliothek der Stadt Kassel.

This publication has been typeset in the multilingual “Brill” typeface. With over 5,100 characters covering Latin, IPA, Greek, and Cyrillic, this typeface is especially suitable for use in the humanities. For more information, please see www.brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 1878-4879

ISBN 978-90-04-30522-9 (hardback)

ISBN 978-90-04-30581-6 (e-book)

Copyright 2016 by Koninklijke Brill nv, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Koninklijke Brill nv incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Nijhoff and Hotei Publishing.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill nv provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA.

Fees are subject to change.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Carissimae uxori meae



Contents

Acknowledgements IX

Abbreviations XI

1 Introduction 1

The Barbarian Past and Early Medieval Historical Narrative 3

Barbarians and Romans, Christians and Pagans: Cultural

Contact in Late Antiquity 11

Historical Writing in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages 27

2 The Gothic Histories of Jordanes and Isidore 39

The Goths and Rome: Historical Background 39

The *De origine actibusque Getarum* of Jordanes:

Background and Summary 42

Jordanes's Sources: Oral or Written? 46

Paganism and Arianism in the *Getica* 60

Goths and Romans: The Purpose of the Gothic Past in the *Getica* 63

Isidore of Seville's *Historia Gothorum*: Background,

Summary, and Sources 69

Religious Identities in Isidore's *Historia Gothorum* 74

Goths, Romans and Barbarians in Isidore's *Historia Gothorum* 81

The Function of Gothic History: Isidore and Jordanes Compared 87

3 The Origins of the Franks 93

The Historical Background to Frankish Historiography 93

Gregory, Fredegar, and the *LHF*: Background and Summaries 95

The Trojan Origin of the Franks 99

The Sources for the Trojan Myth 104

The Function of the Frankish Distant Past 110

4 Paul the Deacon and the Ancient History of the Lombards 115

The Early History of the Lombards: Background and Sources 115

Paul the Deacon and his *Historia Langobardorum* 117

Lombard Oral Tradition in the *Historia Langobardorum* 121

Catholics, Romans, and Lombards in the *Historia Langobardorum* 141

5	A 'Germanic' Hero in Latin and the Vernacular: <i>Waltharius</i> and <i>Waldere</i>	153
	<i>Waltharius</i> and <i>Waldere</i> : Authorship, Content, and Historical Background	155
	Christianity in <i>Waltharius</i>	163
	<i>Waltharius</i> and Germanic Oral Tradition	170
	The Distant Past and its Function: Heroic Narrative as Light Entertainment	178
6	Looking Back to a Troubled Past: <i>Beowulf</i> and Anglo-Saxon Historical Consciousness	184
	Anglo-Saxon England: Origins, Narratives, and Literary Culture	184
	Christianity in <i>Beowulf</i> : The Pagan Past as a Problem	197
	<i>Beowulf</i> , Germanic Tradition, and the Anglo-Saxon Past	212
7	Vernacular Oral Tradition and The 'Germanic' Past	222
	Oral Vernacular Historical Material	225
	"Fashionable Gothicism"? The Value of the 'Germanic' Past	236
8	Conclusions	257
	Bibliography	267
	Index	305

Acknowledgements

This book originated in a doctoral dissertation completed at the Centre for Medieval Studies in the University of Toronto (defended in August 2009), which it now supersedes; it is a pleasant duty to acknowledge here my debts to the various people and institutions without whose manifold aid I would not have been able to complete this work.

I am grateful to the Centre for Medieval Studies for the award of a graduate scholarship for the duration of my studies there (2004–9), and I am deeply indebted to the staff and officers of the Centre, in particular Lawrin Armstrong, John Magee, Andy Orchard, and above all Grace Desa, for their assistance during these years. In addition, I was the recipient of an Ontario Graduate Scholarship (2005–6) and a Canada Graduate Scholarship (2006–9) for the four years of my doctoral work; I thank the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Government of Canada) for their support of my studies. The dissertation was written while I was one of the inaugural fellows at the Jackman Humanities Institute in the University of Toronto, and I should like to thank the faculty fellows for electing me, and the director, Bob Gibbs, the associate director, Kim Yates, and the administrator, Monica Toffoli, for providing me with such a pleasant and efficient space to complete my graduate studies. The last stages of turning the dissertation into a book were completed during my tenure of a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (2014–15), and I thank the Institute for appointing me to this post. The library of the Institute has been an invaluable resource for all the research I have done in Toronto over the years; and without the efforts of the staff at the Interlibrary Loan office at the John P. Robarts Library I would have found it impossible to gain access to many essential works consulted in preparing this book.

The dissertation out of which this monograph emerged was supervised by Nick Everett, Sandy Murray and Andy Orchard, and I am deeply grateful to them for their patience, criticisms, advice, and support. I am particularly grateful to Andy for his continuing encouragement and the example of his teaching and scholarship before, during, and after the years I spent producing this work, without which I would certainly have achieved much less, and with a much heavier spirit. I should also like to thank my examiners, Tom Hill and Ian McDougall, for their many useful comments. In addition, I am grateful to Rob Getz and Markus Stock for their comments and criticisms on earlier drafts of portions of this book. The constructive criticism from the editorial board and

reader for this series has been very helpful in forcing me to clarify my arguments and eliminate some errors. At Brill, Marcella Mulder has once again been an exemplary (and patient) editor, and I am grateful to her and Paige Sammartino for producing this monograph with maximum efficiency and minimum fuss. Lawrin Armstrong's manifold support and encouragement on all issues connected with my scholarly vocation has been invaluable.

Scholarship has occupied the working hours of most of my adult life; but those and the rest of my hours would have little meaning were they not also filled with my wife's presence. I am grateful that I can dedicate my second book, like my first, to her—with all my love.

Abbreviations

<i>AbäG</i>	<i>Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik.</i>
AQDGM	Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters (= Freiherr vom Stein Gedächtnisausgabe).
ARCA	ARCA Classical and Medieval Texts, Papers and Monographs.
ASC	<i>Anglo-Saxon Chronicle:</i> A = Janet M. Bately, ed. 1986. <i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition</i> , vol. 3: <i>MS A</i> . Cambridge: D.S. Brewer. B = Simon Taylor, ed. 1983. <i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition</i> , vol. 4: <i>MS B</i> . Cambridge: D.S. Brewer. C = Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe, ed. 2000. <i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition</i> , vol. 5: <i>MS C</i> . Cambridge: D.S. Brewer. D = G.P. Cubbin, ed. 1996. <i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition</i> , vol. 6: <i>MS D</i> . Cambridge: D.S. Brewer.
ASE	<i>Anglo-Saxon England.</i>
ASPR 3	George Philip Krapp and Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie, eds 1936. <i>Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records</i> , vol. 3: <i>The Exeter Book</i> . New York: Columbia University Press.
BÉFAR	Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome.
BSEM	Brill's Series on the Early Middle Ages.
CBT	Cultures, Beliefs and Traditions: Medieval and Early Modern Peoples.
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis.
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina.
CÉA MÂ	Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Moyen Âge et Temps Modernes.
CÉA SA	Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité.
CELAMA	Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages.
CSMLT	Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth Series.
DA	<i>Deutsches Archiv zur Erforschung des Mittelalters.</i>
DLH	Rudolf Buchner, ed. and trans. 1967. <i>Gregorii episcopi Turonensis Historiarum libri decem</i> . 2 vols. AQDGM 2. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
EHD	Dorothy Whitelock, ed. 1979. <i>English Historical Documents, c. 500–1042</i> , 2nd edn. London: Eyre Methuen.
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
EME	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
ERGA	Ergänzungsbände zum Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde.

<i>Etym.</i>	W.M. Lindsay, ed. 1911. <i>Isidori Hispalensis episcopi Etymologiarum sive originum libri xx</i> . Oxford: Clarendon Press.
<i>FMSt</i>	<i>Frühmittelalterliche Studien</i> .
GL	Germania Latina.
HD	Habelts Dissertationsdrucke, Reihe alte Geschichte.
HE	<i>Bède le Vénérable: Histoire ecclésiastique du peuple anglais</i> , ed. Michael Lapidge, trans. Pierre Monat and Philippe Robin, with introduction and notes by André Crépin. 3 vols. Sources Chrétiennes 489–91. Paris: Éditions du Cerf.
HG	Cristóbal Rodríguez Alonso, ed. and trans. 1975. <i>Las historias de los godos, vándalos y suevos de Isidoro de Sevilla</i> . Colección fuentes y estudios de historia leonesa 13. León: Centro de Estudios e Investigación “San Isidoro”, Archivo Histórico Dicesano, Caja de Ahorros y Monte de Piedad de León.
<i>Hist. Brit.</i>	“Historia Britonnum”. In Edmond Faral, ed. and trans. 1969 [orig. 1929]. <i>La légende arthurienne: Études et documents</i> , vol. 3: 2–62. Bibliothèque de l’École des Hautes Études 257. Paris: Champion.
HL	Ludwig Bethmann and Georg Waitz, eds. 1878. “Historia Langobardorum”. In MGH SRL: 12–187. Hanover: Hahn.
ÍF	Íslenzk fornrit.
<i>JLA</i>	<i>Journal of Late Antiquity</i> .
KUT	Kohlhammer Urban-Taschenbücher.
LCL	Loeb Classical Library.
<i>LHF</i>	Bruno Krusch, ed. 1888. “Liber Historiae Francorum”. In MGH SRM 2: 215–328. Hanover: Hahn.
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica.
AA	Auctores Antiquissimi.
Epp	Epistolae.
LL	Leges.
Poet.	Poetae Latini medii aevi.
SRG	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi.
SRG NS	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum nova series.
SRL	Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum.
SRM	Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum.
SS	Scriptores.
MGM	Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters.
<i>MlatJb</i>	<i>Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch</i> .
MST	Mittellateinische Studien und Texte.

OGI	Ludwig Bethmann and Georg Waitz, eds. 1878. "Origo gentis Langobardorum". In MGH SRL: 2–6. Hanover: Hahn.
P&P	<i>Past and Present</i> .
Pan. lat.	R.A.B. Mynors, ed. 1964. <i>XII panegyrici Latini</i> . Oxford: Clarendon Press.
PBB	<i>Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur</i> .
PG	J.-P. Migne, ed. 1857–1912. <i>Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca</i> .
PL	J.-P. Migne, ed. 1839–64. <i>Patrologiae cursus completus, Series latina</i> .
PLRE	A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale, and J. Morris. 1971–92. <i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> . 3 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
RWAW	Rheinisch-westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vorträge.
S&T	Studies and Texts.
SEM	Studies in the Early Middle Ages.
Sett.	Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo.
SHA	Studies in Historical Archaeoethnology.
SM	Sammlung Metzler.
TOES	Toronto Old English Series.
TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i> .
TRW	Transformation of the Roman World.
TTH	Translated Texts for Historians.
TUMH	Texte und Untersuchungen zur mittelhochdeutschen Heldenepik.
Var.	Theodor Mommsen, ed. 1894. <i>Cassiodori Senatoris Variae</i> . MGH AA 12. Berlin: Weidmann.
VIÖG	Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung.
VKF	Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Frühmittelalterforschung.
ZfdA	<i>Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum</i> .

Introduction

On Christmas Day in the year 800, Charles, king of the Franks and known to posterity as *Karolus magnus* or Charlemagne, was crowned Roman emperor by Pope Leo III in a ceremony at Rome. For the first time since 476, there was again a Roman emperor in the west, albeit one who ruled over only a limited portion of what had once been the western empire, along with some regions east of the Rhine that had always been beyond the empire's boundaries. One of the principal sources for the life of Charlemagne is the *Vita Karoli magni* by his courtier Einhard, a text composed in fluent classicising Latin, and modelled in many respects on Suetonius's imperial biographies.¹ Although, according to Einhard, Charlemagne had trouble writing, he nevertheless appears to have learnt Latin, and was clearly Christian;² like his empire, Charlemagne was manifestly at least in some respects—including his religion—'Roman'. But the fluently Latinate Einhard calls himself a "homo barbarus"; and immediately after telling us about his patron's coronation, he also informs us that Charlemagne ordered "barbara et antiquissima carmina" to be written, a sign of the value the new emperor placed, it could be argued, on an aspect of his 'barbarian' heritage.³

Like Charlemagne, Einhard was a Frank, and a native speaker of a Germanic language; although Charlemagne ruled over many regions that had been within the Roman empire, including its very heartlands in Italy, he was himself from northern Europe, and the core of Carolingian power lay in what are now northern France, western Germany, and Belgium, rather than Rome and central Italy. Charlemagne himself seems to have had some reverence for Theoderic the Great, the Ostrogothic king of Italy in the sixth century: he had a statue of Theoderic removed from Ravenna and transported to Aachen.⁴ This has been seen as an indication that Charlemagne valued Theoderic as a great 'Germanic' ruler of antiquity.⁵ The 'barbarian' inheritance, on this reading, was thus of

1 Holder-Egger (ed. 1911; the coronation is reported at c. 28); on Einhard and Suetonius, see further Innes (1997). On the sources for and implications of the imperial coronation, see Becher (2003): 81–119; Collins (1998): 141–59; McKitterick (2008): 114–18; Schieffer (2004).

2 Holder-Egger (ed. 1911): c. 25.

3 Holder-Egger (ed. 1911): *Prologus*; c. 29.

4 Deliyannis (ed. 2006): c. 94.

5 Löwe (1952): 394–8.

some importance for the new Roman emperor, most likely because he was himself still, in some respects at least, not fully Roman.

Yet there can be no disputing the centrality of the Roman inheritance for Carolingian Europe, and indeed for early medieval western Europe altogether.⁶ After 476, there was no longer a Roman emperor in the west, and the regions that had once been imperial provinces were all, by the early sixth century, factually independent post-imperial kingdoms, ruled in most cases by the descendants of peoples who had once been a military class within late-imperial society, but who were generally, even into the sixth century and certainly for most of the fifth, not native speakers of Latin, largely illiterate, and either not Christian, or Arian rather than Catholic. However, all of the various peoples who established these post-imperial polities in western Europe eventually adopted Catholic Christianity (and therefore the Roman religion), as well as the Latin language, the (primarily Latin) written word both for use in government and for cultural production, and many aspects of late Roman administration. These were all parts of the Roman inheritance; and as a promoter of precisely many of these very Roman aspects of cultural and administrative life in the process that has been termed the ‘Carolingian Renaissance’, Charlemagne was perhaps quite appropriately a Roman emperor.⁷

Charlemagne’s imperial status notwithstanding, even the Franks had originally been, in Roman perception, ‘barbarians’, and one of the most fundamental aspects of early medieval cultural history is—to put it crudely—precisely the process of ‘barbarians’ becoming (more) Roman. This process did not, however, by any means imply the elimination of non-Roman aspects of the ‘barbarian’ heritage: a simple reading of Einhard’s words cited above would suggest that at least one part of that heritage—ancient barbarian songs—were still valued at the very highest levels of this Romanising society. We could thus argue that the value placed both on “*barbara carmina*” (for example) and Roman, Latin texts—the production of which reach unprecedented heights during the Carolingian Renaissance—embodies the synthesis of early medieval culture, which can be said to have emerged out of a conjunction of different elements,

6 There is a vast body of work on the significance of Rome in early medieval culture; see for example McKitterick (2014); Riché (1995): 153–201; Julia Smith (2005): 28–31; 255–92; Wickham (2009): 200–1; 561–2. On the importance of the Rome as a political model and source of legitimacy, not least in the Carolingian era, see also most recently Heather (2013).

7 Of the innumerable studies of various aspects of the ‘Carolingian Renaissance’, see e.g. the essays in McKitterick (ed. 1994) for useful surveys; on the Latin/Roman inheritance, see in particular Brown (1994); Garrison (1994); Garrison (2000); Innes (1997); and Wood (2014), in addition to the works cited in the previous note.

some more Roman than others. Needless to say, the evolution of early medieval culture from its diverse inheritances has been the subject of much previous scholarship; the present monograph provides an examination of one very specific aspect of this process, namely the ways in which texts dealing explicitly with a past that was in some manner 'barbarian' treated that past in relation to the Roman aspect of the cultural inheritance.

The Barbarian Past and Early Medieval Historical Narrative⁸

Narratives concerning the origins and ancient histories of the peoples who established post-Roman kingdoms in western Europe were not, in the form in which they have come down to us in the texts examined below, also contained within the traditions of classical Roman or Greek secular historiography or ethnography, nor within the tradition of ecclesiastical history. The narratives studied in the following chapters are all, in one way or another, evidence of methods of utilising both the Roman and the non-Roman elements of early medieval cultural heritage to provide an expression of some sort of coherent sense of historical consciousness in the present within which these texts were composed.

How did early medieval writers present aspects of the distant past that were not Christian (or at least not orthodox), not Roman, and not a part of the written Latin historical memory inherited from Rome and the Roman Church? How were these two facets of the cultural memory of the early middle ages related to each other in the narratives that explicitly have a barbarian, non-Christian past as their theme? These are the questions that the present work seeks to address, based on analyses of a number of discrete texts from quite

8 Henceforth I use the term 'barbarian' without inverted commas to refer to non-Roman peoples who would have been encompassed by the Roman usage of the term, and thus in general interchangeably with 'non-Roman'. No value judgement is implied by my use of the term, and hopefully the peoples concerned are sufficiently far removed from any living peoples and polities that my choice of vocabulary will be inoffensive. For a defence of the usage of 'barbarian' vs (for example) 'Germanic' or 'non-Roman', see James (2009): 5–8; cf. however Haubrichs (2011): 28, n. 60. The term 'barbarian' and its connotations are discussed in more detail, with further references, in the next section of this chapter. The 'barbarian past', although non-Roman, could also be Christian, and I qualify the phrase further with 'pre-Christian' or 'pre-Catholic' as appropriate. The Jewish past was also, of course, both non-Roman and pre-Christian, but none of the peoples who are the subjects of the texts discussed below had any Jewish or genuinely biblical heritage, so my usage will hopefully be unambiguous in this respect.

different contexts. While there is rarely any explicit relationship between the contexts of the evidence used here, the studies presented below nevertheless do reveal some trends in terms of the place of the barbarian past in early medieval culture. What is equally important to note, however, is that different aspects of the past served different functions within different elements of society: the values and historical consciousness of the militarised lay aristocracy were not necessarily identical to those of the clergy, and this difference is evident from comparing the perspectives adopted by, for example, the authors of the 'national' histories examined below, and those who wrote ecclesiastical histories during the same period.⁹ Nevertheless, another result of this study is the demonstration that even with regard just to historical consciousness, there was no fundamental barrier between the lay and ecclesiastical spheres.

There exists a small corpus of texts that are devoted to the histories of the Goths, Franks, and Lombards from their origins to the author's present, and these are, in the present work, interpreted as efforts to conjoin a sense of an independent identity *as* Goths, Franks, and Lombards, with the inherited Roman and Christian historical traditions. These texts are the Gothic histories of Jordanes (*De origine actibusque Getarum*, hereafter *Getica*; c.551–2) and Isidore of Seville (*Historia Gothorum*, hereafter *HG*; c.630); the Fredegar chronicle (c.660) and the *Liber historiae Francorum* (hereafter *LHF*; c.727), both of which provide narratives about the origins of the Franks; and Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* (*HL*; c.790). Chapters 2–4 of this book are devoted to these narratives, which are, with the exception of Fredegar, all explicitly 'national' histories in that they are concerned exclusively or primarily with the history of one people that was also the ruling class of a post-Roman kingdom, and with which the author clearly identified. (The Fredegar chronicle is an exception in that it starts as a universal chronicle, but it too increasingly focuses on the Franks, and it is clear that Frankish history is the primary concern.)

In the latter part of this book, I examine two epics, the Latin *Waltharius* (composed in the ninth or tenth century) and the Old English *Beowulf* (composed at some point between c.700 and c.1000), and finally some shorter vernacular texts, along with other evidence regarding the place of the barbar-

9 Here and in the following pages, the term 'national' history is used as a shorthand for a history that is devoted to the past of a single people. In other words, it excludes universal histories or world chronicles, as well as the vernacular legendary matter that deals with many different peoples in a single narrative. The use of the word 'national' is simply a circumlocution for 'relating to a single people', and should not be taken to have any relation to modern concepts of nationality and nationhood. For a succinct survey of 'national' histories, see Martínez Pizarro (2003); the relevant specialist scholarship is cited and discussed more fully at appropriate points below.

ian past in contemporary historical consciousness. All the works studied in second part of the present monograph tell of a distant past that was not contained, in the way these narratives report it, in any prior written historical tradition; all of these texts appear to derive primarily from oral vernacular sources. None of them were origin narratives, and there is evidence (presented and discussed in Chapter 7) that such tales of distant heroes that existed in an oral milieu were condemned in clerical circles. Since they could not have had any kind of immediate function beyond the provision of entertainment and the conveying of secular values, clerical censure of these narratives was not easy to overcome, and since writing was largely controlled by the Church, few such texts survive from our period. They are, nevertheless, important evidence for the existence of a secular historical culture that found expression chiefly in the vernacular and in an oral milieu.

All of these texts are representative of a secular historical consciousness that was nevertheless deeply imbued with Christianity, and indeed survives within a written, and for the most part Latin form—the medium and language of the Church, though not exclusively of the Church. They are also all narratives that were not just about the past, but about a distant past that had fundamental differences, in all of these texts, from the present within which they were produced: this distant past was not Roman; it was not (explicitly) Christian; and it had lived in a language that was not Latin. Nevertheless, all the works examined below betray evidence of a form of reconciliation between a perception of a barbarian, non-Christian heritage, and a Christian and Roman/Latin inheritance that had a very tangible presence.

The texts studied here are not the only works that could have been examined for the purposes of the present monograph. Other 'national' histories are extant from the early middle ages, notably the *Historia Brittonum* (c.830), Widukind of Corvey's *Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum libri tres* (967–73), and Dudo of St Quentin's *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniæ ducum* (996–1015). The first of these is something of an anomaly, since it is aware of the real Roman past of its subjects, as well as their post-Roman history; all three works, however, perform a process of integrating Roman/Christian/Latin, and barbarian or otherwise non-Roman elements, within a more or less coherent historical consciousness.¹⁰

10 On Widukind, see fundamentally Beumann (1950); Beumann (1970); Beumann (1982); see also Eggert and Pätzold (1984): 206–22; Mortensen (1995); Plassmann (2006): 243–64; and for the text, see Hirsch and Lohmann (eds 1935). On Dudo, see Gatti and Degl'Innocenti (eds 199); and Plassmann (2006): 265–89; for the text, see Lair (ed. 1865). The relevant scholarship on the *Historia Brittonum* is cited in Chapter 6.

As such, it might appear to have been logical to extend the present book to encompass studies of these histories, not least because they present useful comparanda and examples of how approaches to this process did (or did not) change over time and across a wider range of historical contexts. However, any work of scholarship must stop somewhere: a number of even later histories also, albeit in a variety of different ways, undertake the same task of providing a synthesis between a barbarian past and a Roman inheritance, including, for example, the highly erudite and voluminous *Gesta Danorum* of Saxo Grammaticus (c.1208), and it would not be possible to keep expanding the scope of this monograph without sacrificing the gains of detailed close readings of the individual texts.¹¹ I shall argue below that Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* is the first extant 'national' history genuinely to provide such a synthesis with a minimum of embarrassment regarding the cleavages (potential or real) within the story it tells; this makes it an appropriate point to curtail the examination of 'national' histories and move on to other material.¹²

For the most part, the Latin 'national' histories discussed below have not been studied in conjunction with the epics and brief vernacular narratives also examined in the present monograph: the one group is thought to be 'history', while the other is 'literature', and they have accordingly largely been examined by scholars of different disciplines.¹³ Here I seek to bridge this divide, since both sets of texts were evidence of a historical consciousness seeking to express a view about a particular kind of past. While even in the middle ages history and literature might not have been perceived to be identical, we must recall that human consciousness does not respect modern disciplinary boundaries: the

11 On Saxo, see the essays in Friis-Jensen (ed. 1981); Friis-Jensen (1987); Friis-Jensen (1992); and the recent introduction of Riis (2006); for the text, see Friis-Jensen and Fisher (ed. and trans. 2015).

12 By this I do not mean, of course, that there would be no value to comparing the texts examined here with others that are not, including but not restricted to those named above; see for example Plassmann (2006), and from a more theoretical perspective with a wider range of comparanda, Graus (1975). For a broad-ranging survey of 'national' histories in the middle ages, see Kersken (1995).

13 An exception that briefly compares a vernacular heroic epic (*Beowulf*) with some Latin histories (including those of Paul the Deacon and Jordanes) with regard to narrative style is presented by Scheil (2008). There is, of course, a large body of Germanist literary scholarship that has mined some of the Latin narratives examined below for reflexes of Germanic heroic legend for use as comparanda to the extant vernacular texts; the relevant works are cited at appropriate points below, but it should be noted that the purpose of this scholarship has rarely been a detailed examination of the Latin narratives as what they are—Latin narratives—and there has been to my knowledge no detailed prior examination in comparative perspective of historical consciousness as manifest in these two types of text.

historical consciousness of a people, past or present, will comprise, and be influenced by, more than just texts that might be perceived formally as 'history' of some sort. After all, our own conception of our past is shaped at least as much (arguably more) by historical fiction, films, and television dramas as it is by the works of academic historians; there is no reason to believe that early medieval historical consciousness was more respectful of the segregation between genres that modern academic disciplinary boundaries might seek to impose on it.

All of these texts show that however much we might feel that there might have been sharp divides between a pre-Christian and Christian period, between a Latinate and vernacular culture, between barbarian and Roman pasts, or between the milieux of the clergy and the laity, these pairs of opposites are not necessarily the best way of understanding early medieval culture. The texts examined below do not, for the most part, present the past in terms of such oppositions, but rather stress continuities over cleavages. While the present work is not an effort to provide a holistic interpretation of early medieval culture and how it reconciled its varied inheritances, it does intend to add to the many recent reassessments of the nature of this culture from one specific angle, the attitude towards the past, and specifically, towards precisely that distant past that we might perceive today as having been discontinuous with the present of early medieval societies. For this purpose, an interdisciplinary approach seemed to me to be useful, and I hope my readers, whether students of literature or history, will also gain some stimulus from my transgression of the disciplinary boundaries.

A further rationale behind this selection of texts also has a historiographical justification. A 'Germanic' spectre has long loomed over the study of the early middle ages: historians and philologists alike have sought evidence of the survival of some sort of 'Germanic' antiquity in the extant literary and material survivals from this period, and have often felt it appropriate, for this reason, to interpret the extant evidence with reference to other sources that are also—for better or worse reasons—thought to be 'Germanic', though not necessarily contemporary or belonging to the same historical context. Furthermore, the cultural heritage of this period has often been understood in oppositional terms specifically as Roman and 'Germanic', not just Roman and barbarian. The early period of encounters between 'Germanic' peoples and Rome has been seen as a 'heroic age' (c.300–c.600, though in some versions it stretches even further back), commemorated in later narrative verse traditions in the vernacular, reflections of which are thought to be extant even in early medieval Latin texts, including some of the works to be discussed below.¹⁴

14 On the concept of a 'heroic age' in a broader context, see fundamentally Chadwick (1912), and Bowra (1957). Specifically on a 'Germanic' heroic age and its reflection in (later) extant vernacular works, see in particular the classic statements of Heusler (1905), and

It is certainly the case that the Goths, Lombards, Franks, Angles, Saxons, and Burgundians—the peoples who figure as the principal protagonists and/or primary or initial audiences of the narratives to be examined below—were all Germanic peoples, in that their vernacular tongue belonged to the Germanic sub-group of the Indo-European family of languages. It is also the case that the corpus of what literary scholars define as Germanic heroic poetry does contain narratives that have as a historical core events that took place largely in the period c.300–c.600—insofar as any of these narratives can in fact be related to any sort of historical realities at all. But there is little evidence from before the eighth century, at least, for any sense even of an awareness of an inter-relatedness among these peoples, and certainly not of any perception among them of any significance of such inter-relatedness—any sort of knowledge of and meaning granted to a common ‘Germanentum’, or ‘Germanic-ness’, that has any relation to the burden of significance such a concept has borne in modern scholarship. Furthermore, the historical links between the extant heroic texts and any verifiable historical fact are both invariably slender and often quite tenuous, and therefore should not be overvalued. And finally, as we shall see in Chapter 7, even when we find writers displaying a knowledge of the linguistic kinship of the Germanic languages, this did not imply either a strict division between ‘Germanic’ and Roman cultural heritages, nor a perception of a sense of a common identity of any kind derived from any other form of kinship, cultural or otherwise, among the Germanic-speaking peoples.¹⁵

All the texts discussed below concern themselves primarily with a Germanic people—in the linguistic sense. The epics and poetic texts examined in the latter chapters also contain material extant either only in Germanic vernaculars, or also, and primarily, in those vernaculars. Jordanes’s *Getica*, Paul’s *HL*, as

Heusler (1943): 155–60, as well as Heusler (1909); see further, for critiques, restatements, and refinements of the concept of a ‘Germanic’ heroic age and its commemoration in vernacular poetry, Andersson (1988b); Ebenbauer (1988); Haubrichs (2002); Haug (1975); and Haug (1994). For a broader, comparative perspective, see Reichl (2000). A recent, thorough, and insightful synthesis is provided by Harris (2012). My own views have been presented in Ghosh (2007). For critiques that are in essence rejections of the concept altogether (or at least its validity as an analytical category for the understanding of the origins of vernacular heroic poetry in the Germanic languages), see Frank (1991); and Goffart (2002).

15 For critiques of the concept of an early ‘Germanic culture’, see Amory (1997): 326–31; Goffart (1980): 12–29; Goffart (1995); Goffart (2006): 187–229; and Halsall (2007): 22–4; 118–31. For a very recent effort to reinstate a (weaker) concept of “pan-Germanic identity”, see Neidorf (2013a). The points made above are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7 below. See also, on classical perceptions of ‘Germanic’ peoples, Isaac (2004): 427–39.

well as *Waltharius*, *Beowulf*, and the shorter vernacular texts have all been seen as expressions, in some form or another, of 'Germanic' culture. (Indeed, this is even true of the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours.) They are thus a useful sample with which not only to make the point that there was, by the end of the eighth century at the latest, really no perception of a great divide between barbarian and Roman inheritances at least with regard to historical consciousness, but also to reiterate the point that—once again specifically in the context of historical consciousness—there appears to have been no special significance attached to any 'Germanic' identity or heritage.¹⁶

The studies below present analyses of literary texts that have a particular historical relevance, and are read with due attention to their historical context (insofar as this can be determined); but this book is not intended to be a study of early medieval historical consciousness at a more general level. It does not seek to match the results of analyses of specific literary texts to other, non-literary forms of evidence to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of how early medieval people thought about their past(s).¹⁷ Nor does it intend to use analyses of this particular aspect of historical consciousness to come to conclusions regarding early medieval notions of group identity. Other kinds of sources present their own problems of interpretation, and are not easily amenable to the same kind of interrogation as literary narratives, thus rendering a comparison of the evidence of differing genres an

16 A note on usage is thus apposite here: 'Germanic', when used without inverted commas, refers solely to language. A Germanic people, in my lexicon, is simply a people that speaks a Germanic language, defined as Germanic on the basis of purely linguistic criteria that have nothing whatsoever to do with ethnicity or other markers of identity. This need not mean that any of these Germanic peoples knew that their native tongue was a Germanic language; that they felt any kind of identity with other peoples who spoke a Germanic language; or even that they particularly cared that the language they spoke was Germanic and not something else. A phrase such as 'Germanic tradition' does not, in my usage, imply any sort of bond between peoples beyond that of language; it refers only to the fact that narrative elements contained in this tradition were known in more than one Germanic language, and that across Germanic languages there might have been similarities of poetic form caused not least by the similarities of the languages. There are no further implications to my use of the phrase 'Germanic tradition'. The term 'Germanic' used without inverted commas therefore does not, in this study, carry any implications of any kind of ancient, more or less unified, 'Germanic' culture which would allow one to interpret the practices or textual remains of one Germanic-speaking group by reference to the practices or textual remains of another.

17 In this regard, the present study follows the examples of Coumert (2007), Plassmann (2006), and Reydellet (1981).

exercise fraught with difficulty.¹⁸ Concentrating solely on narrative texts, which are explicitly intended to convey to readers stories and views about the distant past, allows me to address the question of the role of this past in a more well-defined manner, focusing on the issues of religious difference and the distinctions between Romans and barbarians. I shall show, over the course of the following pages, that a pattern can be identified regarding the way these issues were treated across a lengthy period of time. My arguments are valid in the first instance for the texts examined here, but I believe that a demonstration, on the basis of these examples, of the existence of this pattern can also contribute something to our understanding of secular historical culture in the early middle ages, and the place in it of the distant, barbarian, non-biblical past.

However, given how little we know about the authors, their audiences, and the reception of their texts, it is difficult to say much about the extent to which the views presented in these works reflect widespread ideas about the past. The reception history of the texts can tell us a little: Jordanes, Fredegar, the *LHF* and the *HL* were widely read in the ninth and tenth centuries at least,¹⁹ and the references to figures of the past in vernacular poetry examined in Chapter 7 below suggest that narratives about them were widely known. Some of the ideas contained in the ‘national’ histories seem to have resonated with later audiences; it is difficult to know how much they did so among contemporaries, or even the extent to which they reflected a common historical consciousness in the periods in which they were written. Once again, the common elements in these works—deriving from an effort to stress continuity between distant origins and the present, regardless of the religious difference and the gap between a barbarian past and a present imbued with a very Roman heritage—suggests that since several authors had similar concerns, these reflected a view more broadly prevalent at least among the secular aristocracy. It is also likely that the authors of these texts were responding to audience expectations, which were thus in turn reflected in their narratives.²⁰ To say more, however, would be purely speculative.

18 Good examples of studies using a multitude of different sources to attempt to understand ethnic identities in this period are Amory (1997), and Koch (2012). For a study exposing the complexities involved in using law-codes to understand ethnicity, see Amory (1993).

19 For knowledge of Jordanes's *Getica*, Fredegar, the *LHF* and Paul's *HL* in the ninth century and later, see Innes (2000): 243–4; Lapidge (2006): 160; 239; 272; McKitterick (1989): 238–41; McKitterick (2004b): 13–15; 37–8; 49–51; 55–8; 75–83; 201; 212. Isidore's *HG* does not seem to have enjoyed a wide reception.

20 Plassmann (2006): 22–3.

These then, are the questions posed in this book and the constraints within which they are addressed. The individual texts will be given a more detailed introduction in each of the following chapters, along with a brief (and very basic) overview of the historical background regarding the people(s) concerned, their earlier contact with Rome and Christianity in the historical record, and the relevant narrative sources available in addition to the texts to be examined here. In the remainder of the present chapter I provide, first, a more general introduction to the historical context of cultural contact between Romans and barbarians in late antiquity and the scholarship on barbarian identity; and second, a (necessarily very brief) survey of the other kinds of historical narrative extant from this period, including both texts that were demonstrably known to the authors of the works to be examined here, as well as others that must be understood as part of the intellectual and cultural furniture of the audience of these texts.

Barbarians and Romans, Christians and Pagans: Cultural Contact in Late Antiquity²¹

The term ‘barbarian’ already had a long history by our period; the Romans had inherited it from the Greeks and generally used the term to indicate foreign, exotic, and (in their view) uncivilised peoples around their borders.²² There was a fairly prominent discourse in late antiquity about barbarians needing to be ‘tamed’ by Roman emperors, who are presented as having to keep the peace and defend Rome against the savage barbarians; and while the sources show

21 The following paragraphs present what is a necessarily superficial synthesis of a vast and often fractious body of scholarship; for a recent useful, clear, and balanced survey, see James (2009). Other important recent works include Halsall (2007), and Heather (2009); see further the essays collected in Mitchell and Greatrex (eds 2000), and Mathisen and Shanzer (eds 2011). For reasons of space—and relevance to the primary topic of the present monograph—I do not engage in detailed discussion of these or other works, nor cite profusely the earlier scholarship.

22 For a brief history of the use of the term, see Gillett (2009): 397–402; see further the surveys of barbarians and the term ‘barbarus’ and its cognates in late antiquity (and modern scholarship) in James (2009): 1–20; Maas (2012); and Mathisen (2011). On classical perceptions of barbarians and other ‘others’, cf. the contrasting views in Isaac (2004); Gruen (2011); and Woolf (2011).

barbarians being settled within the empire, the literary scheme of rebellious settler-barbarians is also quite common.²³

It is easy to follow blindly the Roman rhetoric that differentiates starkly between Romans and barbarians, but it would be unwise to do so. Just as the narratives examined below do not operate with such a strict dichotomy between Romans and barbarians, it is also the case that in actual fact, the boundaries were less sharp than they might appear; and even the late antique sources do not present such a singular, undifferentiated image of barbarians.²⁴ As Ralph Mathisen and Danuta Shanzer recently stated, we should not operate with a model of “cultural and social segregation of Roman and barbarian populations [...] Romans and barbarians interacted in every way imaginable, social, cultural, political, and religious”.²⁵

The Roman empire had, for most of its history, engaged in the process of absorbing barbarians (and other outsiders of one sort or another) within its economic, legal, political, and cultural sphere; after the grant of citizenship to all free men within the empire in 212, distinctions between Romans and barbarians seem to have become, in law and practice, even less clear than earlier. It appears to be the case that barbarians now became citizens of the empire as long as they resided within its boundaries, and it has been suggested that many people who might still have been classified as barbarians were nevertheless now able to “enjoy the benefits of Roman civil law without having to give up

23 Ladner (1976). On Roman perceptions of barbarians in late antiquity, see further Halsall (2007): 45–56; Maas (2012); Wickham (2009): 44–9. Specifically on how barbarians are presented by fourth- and fifth-century historians, see Rohrbacher (2002): 207–36. For detailed studies on the very influential Christian historian Orosius's views of barbarians in the early fifth century, see further Goetz (1980b); Inglebert (1996): 566–8; and van Nuffelen (2012): 170–85; for a recent comparison of Orosius and Augustine's treatment of barbarians, see Clark (2011). Orosius and his significance are briefly discussed in the next section of the present chapter.

24 As Edward James states, it is likely that we “have a more black-and-white view of ethnic difference than the Romans or barbarians”: James (2009): 126. In a similar vein, Hans-Werner Goetz has suggested, with regard to Merovingian sources, that “ethnische Abgrenzungen [sind] (allein) ein Problem der modernen Forschung”: Goetz (2004): 555. On the difficulty of determining, from the sources, what criteria were used to distinguish between Roman and barbarian in the sixth century, see further Greatrex (2000); on the use of the term ‘barbarus’ and its potentially mixed connotations in Gaul/Francia c.400–c.700, see Wood (2011). With regard to classical antiquity as well, Erich Gruen has recently argued that Romans “had far more mixed, nuanced, and complex opinions about other peoples”: Gruen (2011): 3; but cf. Isaac (2004).

25 Mathisen and Shanzer (2011): 4.

their own cultural identity”.²⁶ Whatever aspects of non-Roman culture they might have retained, these Roman barbarians, by functioning as Roman citizens, were also clearly Roman; and despite a legal prohibition from the 370s, there appear to have been no real *de facto* restrictions of marriage between barbarians and Romans (at least among the elites), another suggestion that in fact, once within Roman boundaries, the distinctions could become increasingly blurred.²⁷

The circumstances in which barbarians became Roman appear to have been principally military. Many were recruited by one means or another as soldiers in the Roman army, and from the third century onwards at the latest, it became common practice for some aspects of the defence of the empire to be delegated to ‘warlords’, leaders of armed groups settled at the borders of the empire, either just within or immediately without those borders.²⁸ Some of these groups were incorporated within the Roman army, while others, the so-called ‘foederati’, functioned as allies.²⁹ Over the course of the fourth and fifth centuries, many of these warlords became generals leading not just their ‘own’ troops (that is to say, some sort of barbarian grouping), but whole Roman armies of mixed origin. Indeed, already in the fourth century, a number of them held the title of ‘magister militum’ or ‘magister militum utriusque militiae’: commander-in-chief of the Roman armed forces in a province or in the whole of the western or eastern empire. Some even advanced to becoming consul.³⁰ Many of these barbarian-Roman military commanders were among the groups labelled (by the Romans) ‘Franks’ or ‘Goths’ (as well as other groups not among those to be examined in the present work).³¹ Indeed, there are a number of attested marriages between such barbarian military leaders and

26 Maas (2012): 63.

27 The issues relating to law and citizenship have been examined in most detail by Ralph Mathisen: Mathisen (2006); Mathisen (2012). Specifically on the marriage laws, see Sivan (1996). See further the useful survey of barbarians in contact with Rome from the third to the late fifth century in James (2009): 33–75; 194–201.

28 Another mode of contact that could lead to forms of intercultural communication was captivity, also obviously in the context of military action: Grey (2011); Lenski (2011).

29 On the ‘foederati’ and the recruitment of barbarians in the Roman army, see in brief Jones (1964): 611–13; 619–23; for a more recent survey discussing the ‘foederati’ and their significance, see Stickler (2007); and see further James (2009): 161–73. For a more general survey of the late Roman army, see Jones (1964): 607–86.

30 On these developments, see Liebeschuetz (2007); MacGeorge (2002); Whittaker (1994): 243–78.

31 Some examples of high-ranking barbarians in the Roman army in the fourth century who are thought to be Franks or Goths, and attested in contemporary or near-contemporary

Roman aristocrats; the extent to which such cross-cultural kin-relationships were common lower down the social scale cannot really be determined, but there seems to be no particular reason to believe that there was any significant level of formal segregation.³²

We have to conclude, therefore, that whatever the cause of the 'fall' of Rome, it was not the result of a sudden influx of completely exotic, uncivilised barbarians: the military leaders who succeeded imperial rule and established kingdoms on the continent in the post-imperial west belonged to peoples that, in every case, had had at least a century of contact with the Roman empire and often lived within its bounds, perhaps even as Roman citizens; had collaborated more or less closely with the Roman army; and had in most cases in fact been in some manner a part of the Roman army. While we can know little about the level of 'Romanisation' of the lower ranks, there is every reason to believe of the military commanders that, whatever other cultural affiliations they might have retained, they were also quite Roman.³³

In other words: the barbarians who established post-imperial kingdoms had most certainly partaken of a great deal of Roman culture, whatever other

sources (listed in chronological order of their first appointment to high military office): Gaiso (Goth): *magister militum*(?) (350); consul (351) (*PLRE* 1: 380).

Silvanus (Frank): *tribune* (351); *magister peditum* (352/353–5); Augustus (355) (*PLRE* 1: 840–1).

Mallobaudes (Frank): *tribune* (354–5); *comes domesticorum and rex Francorum* (according to Ammianus) (378) (*PLRE* 1: 539; Ammianus: xxxi.x.6).

Flavius Merobaudes (Frank): *magister peditum* (375–88?); consul (377; 383; 388) (*PLRE* 1: 598–9).

Flavius Bauto (Frank): *magister militum* (c.380–5); consul (385) (*PLRE* 1: 159–60). Arbogastes (Frank): *comes rei militaris* (380); *magister militum* (c.388–94) (*PLRE* 1: 95–7).

Modares (Goth): *magister militum* (380–2) (*PLRE* 1: 605).

Flavius Richomeres (Frank): *magister militum* (383; 388–93); consul (384) (*PLRE* 1: 765–6).

Gainas (Goth): *comes rei militaris* (395–9); *magister utriusque militiae* (399–400) (*PLRE* 1: 379–80).

Flavius Fravitta (Goth): *magister militum* (395/400); consul (401) (*PLRE* 1: 372–3).

32 On the generals' marriages, see Liebeschuetz (2007): 482; 489; see further, on documented kin-relationships between barbarians and Romans (principally with regard to the elites), Blockley (1982); Claude (1989); Demandt (1989); James (2009): 194–6; Krautschick (1989); Soraci (1974). Even if there was little legal enforcement of any prohibition on intermarriage, one should not automatically assume that it was common; the example of modern multicultural societies in, for example, Canada or the UK, demonstrates that even after two generations, cross-cultural marriages can remain relatively rare.

33 On the potential for conflicted loyalties or identities among these military commanders, see Chauvot (1984).

identities they might have had in addition; and while the forms and meaning of Roman-ness were also arguably altered as a result of this contact in some ways, to assume that the culture of the barbarian groups remained untouched by Roman contact is implausible, and not supported by the extant evidence.³⁴ Moreover, we must recall that these kingdoms were, initially at least, established as clients of the empire, rather than as truly independent polities; the process of becoming properly ‘post-Roman’ was a long one, and involved a good deal of Roman-ness as well, not least with regard to the religion of the people within these kingdoms, all of which were, by c.500 at the latest, predominantly, if not completely, Christian (though not necessarily Catholic).³⁵

That being said, one should not push the argument for continuity too far. There was certainly also some amount of social and economic disruption in the fifth and sixth centuries;³⁶ and however much the western kingdoms inherited from Rome in terms of law, language, religion, and administrative practice, the barbarian settlers in these regions also brought with them their

34 Guy Halsall makes the important point that even the supposed ‘barbarisation’ of the late Roman army in terms of its practices, clothing, and customs, is overstated: Halsall (2007): 102–9. See further, with regard to dress, hairstyles, and customs in Ostrogothic Italy, Amory (1997): 338–47; Arnold (2013); and James (2009): 168–70. A detailed study of one example, the Vandals in Africa, is provided by von Rummel (2007), who concludes that what we can know of their material culture provides no evidence that it was in fact particularly distinct as non-Roman. For a recent argument that the Gothic kingdom in Italy was in fact very ‘Roman’, while some Italo-Romans in it also began to adopt some ‘Gothic’ traits, see Arnold (2014). None of this detracts from the fact that the “cultural sharing was a two-way street” in this period that resulted in a “polyethnic cultural world, with cultural frontiers between Romans and barbarians that were increasingly permeable in both directions” (Mathisen and Shanzer 2011: 4).

35 For a useful recent (and succinct) survey on the establishment and early history of the western kingdoms, see Kulikowski (2012); cf. the varying perspectives given in Halsall (2007): 220–319; Heather (2009): 266–385; James (2009): 76–94; and Wickham (2009): 76–149. A stimulating discussion of Roman/Italian views of fifth-century Gaul and the process of that region’s becoming ‘post-Roman’ while also remaining in many respects ‘Roman’ is provided in Arnold (2014): 235–61. England is a rather different case from the continental successors to the empire with regard to the points made in this and the following paragraphs; see James (2009): 202–4; and Ward-Perkins (2000); further discussion and references are given below in Chapter 6.

36 Cf. e.g. Goffart (1980); and Ward-Perkins (2005). Some sort of middle ground between these two positions is probably the most plausible way of interpreting the period. Since the heated debate regarding the modalities of settlement and the extent of disruption involved is not really pertinent to my subject, I avoid further discussion of this topic, though I cite without comment the more fundamental works of scholarship on it where appropriate. For the most significant recent salvoes, see (in chronological order) Goffart (2006); Halsall (2007); Heather (2009); Goffart (2010); Halsall (2010).

own, non-Roman heritages. These settlers were always a minority of the population, but this need not necessarily mean that the barbarian aspects of their culture were swiftly or comprehensively swamped by the culture of the Roman majority.³⁷ While it is important to bear in mind the fact that, with the exception of England and some border regions, in almost all the lands that had been within the western Roman empire, the vernacular tongue was eventually a Latin-derived (that is to say, Romance) rather than Germanic language, we should also remember that linguistic and cultural identity are not necessarily identical. It is clear from the example of Paul the Deacon's *HL* (as we shall see in Chapter 4) that although the Lombard language was most likely no longer in common use and the Lombards were thoroughly 'Italian' by his time, some sense of cultural identity still imbued the narratives of pre-Christian, non-Roman, non-Italian origins he transmitted, which concerned a period in which the Lombards had spoken a different language.

While religious identity has sometimes been seen as an important marker of either Roman or barbarian allegiance, the continental barbarians even of the fifth century, and certainly of the sixth, appear to have been overwhelmingly Christian. Many (though not all) were Arians and thus did not accept the authority over them of the bishop of Rome. This might suggest that Arianism was a distinctively barbarian trait in the fifth century; but it was also self-evidently equally a part of the Roman inheritance rather than a specifically barbarian attribute: Christianity, in whatever form, had only come to barbarians through contact with Rome. Thus to view the Arian religion of many barbarian groups as being necessarily something that made them non-Roman is not really an accurate perspective on the matter, even though the distinction in Christian denomination could clearly be a significant cultural divide for at least some witnesses, not least the clerical authors on whom we depend for most of our evidence. The distinction between Arian and Nicene Christians is not sufficient, however, for us to postulate a clear distinction between 'barbaritas' and 'Romanitas' separating people who lived in the same regions—particularly because precisely the fact of their being clergy arguably meant that the authors of our sources might have made religious differences appear to be more divisive than they might have been in actual fact in the daily lives (or even in the political actions) of most people (or even just the secular ruling classes).

Leaving aside the hotly debated legal and economic issues (which are less relevant for the subject of this monograph), with regard to culture alone, it is clear that barbarian identity in the period between c.300 and c.600 was not static, and was also neither impervious to, nor wholly submerged by, the contact

37 On this point see also Wickham (2009): 97–102; 105–7.

with and lasting influence of Rome. Much ink has been spilt on the ways in which the barbarian and Roman cultural inheritances interacted to shape ethnic identities in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries in particular, and some of the relevant scholarship will be discussed at appropriate points in the following chapters. For the purposes of the present work, the most important aspects of the debate on early medieval ethnic identity have to do with the age, authenticity, value, and function of the narratives concerning the past, and views on this issue diverge considerably. Given that much of the discussion has been based precisely on narratives about the distant past, a survey of the contours of the debate and a presentation of my own position is apposite here—particularly since, as Chris Wickham recently stated, “no one in the rest of Late Antique studies gets as upset about anything” as do those who debate (‘Germanic’) ethnicity in this period.³⁸

The participants in the debate are often divided into two camps, the so-called ‘Vienna School’, and the so-called ‘Toronto/Goffart School’. The position of the latter can sometimes seem to be that there is in fact no authentic material (that is to say, genuinely ancient, or at least genuinely barbarian, and not derived from written Roman sources) in any of the narratives, and nothing in them derives from oral tradition of any kind: these narratives are entirely constructed on the basis of earlier Latin and Greek texts, and even the vernacular poetry extant from the ninth century and later was stimulated by a reading of Jordanes rather than originating in any vernacular oral tradition.³⁹ At the other end of the scale, the Vienna School can read information provided in an eighth-century source in the light of later, thirteenth-century material from Scandinavia, primarily on the basis of both sources being ‘Germanic’; ‘oral tradition’ is seen as the source for the origin narratives, which are thought to contain something that is, because it “does not fit” with the rest of the narrative, indeed an authentic ethnic memory that served as a marker of identity.⁴⁰

This summary is, of course, something of a caricature; both sides of the debate are (normally, but not invariably) rather more sophisticated, and both sides have produced work that (normally, but not invariably) contains much

38 Wickham (2012): 552.

39 For the extreme position, see Frank (1991); Goffart (1988): *passim*; and Goffart (2002); cf. Chapter 7 below; and Ghosh (2007): 229; 242–7.

40 For the extreme position, see Pohl (2000b): 16; and Pohl (2002): 228–9 (quote); 233; see also e.g. Wolfram (1994); and cf. Ghosh (2007): 245; 247–51. Note that Walter Pohl appears to be willing to change his views somewhat—rather more so, it seems to me, than both Walter Goffart and Herwig Wolfram; thus the Pohl position in 2000 or 2002 is not necessarily identical with that of 2013.

that has greatly enriched our understanding of the period. It is also certainly the case that there is really no monolithic 'school', as the individual scholars who have been grouped into one or another camp often have quite different approaches to the issues at hand. Nevertheless, it is equally certainly the case that the debate is often presented and carried out in precisely such starkly polarised terms as my caricature suggests. It seems to me, however, that—perhaps because this subject seems to excite passions in a manner unusual in medieval studies—these kinds of positions tend to make the discussion both unnecessarily polemical, and ultimately rather sterile, partly because the argument and evidence can both get drowned in the polemic.

The fact is that the extant narratives are indeed substantially derived from borrowings from or adaptations of a clearly Roman (or Greco-Roman) inheritance (whether or not the producers of these texts thought of it in that manner), but equally clearly often contain some material for which no extant Roman source can be found. This does not, of course, mean that this material is necessarily ancient, or derived from some sort of long-enduring 'oral tradition', nor even that it is free of written, Latin, and Roman influence. But it does exist, and we cannot dismiss it, nor later (ninth- and tenth-century) evidence for something that can only be called an oral tradition of historical narrative in Germanic languages, as unimportant, or simply created from the reading of Latin texts. These points are elaborated on in some detail at appropriate points in the chapters below.

The principal contributions of the Vienna School and those scholars associated with it have had to do with the theory of ethnogenesis.⁴¹ In the context of

41 For the major expositions of the theory itself, and supportive contributions to the debate from a variety of perspectives, see, in chronological order, Wenskus (1961); Wolfram (1979); Wolfram (1981); Geary (1983); Geary (1988); Wolfram (1990); Wood (1990); Wolfram (1994); Pohl (1991); Pohl (1994b); Pohl (1998a); Pohl (1998b); Wolfram (1998); Geary (1999); Pohl (1999); Geary (2002); Pohl (2002); and most recently Pohl (2013). The most succinct and recent summary of the theory and its major critics is presented in Maas (2012): 74–7; the most detailed (if excessively polemical) historiographical analysis of ethnogenesis theory and its development is in Murray (2002); see further also the surveys of the debate in Gillett (2006); and James (2009): 102–28. In addition, for useful recent surveys of the modern historiography on barbarian identity in relation to modern national identity, see Wood (2008), and in much greater detail, Ian N. Wood (2013), which should be read along with Fouracre (2014). Ian Wood's recent works perform the salutary service of placing the present debate within the larger perspective of modern scholarship on these issues from the eighteenth century onwards; while this history of historical writing is obviously not a subject one could expect most scholars of the early middle ages to be as deeply immersed in as Wood, the longer perspective is nevertheless something we should all at least be more aware of than is normally the case. Such awareness might even help to reduce just

late antique and early medieval studies, ethnogenesis theory has been almost exclusively concerned with groups that are thought to have had a ‘Germanic’ identity.⁴² The most prominent proponents of this theory have been Herwig Wolfram and Walter Pohl, although it originated, in this context, in the work of Reinhard Wenskus. Other prominent scholars outside Vienna whose work has been sympathetic to ethnogenesis theory include Patrick Geary and Ian Wood, who—like Pohl—use the concept in a more flexible manner than Wenskus and Wolfram, with less emphasis on the concept of a more or less stable ‘Traditionskern’. Patrick Amory’s monograph on Ostrogothic Italy has also been claimed as an example of the use of ethnogenesis theory.⁴³

The core components of ethnogenesis theory are that ethnic identity was flexible, and was constructed in a manner that included Roman and barbarian influence; much of the recent scholarship sympathetic to this theory would agree that ethnic identity was a ‘situational construct’, created and utilised because of and within particular historical situations. This is in itself not only plausible, but almost certainly true of the nature of identity in the period in question (and, *mutatis mutandis*, in other periods as well); the problems arise when one has to define more closely how and in what ways ethnicity or ethnic (or other forms of) identity was flexible and constructed; which aspects were malleable and how much and to what; what situations could and did give rise to what sorts of constructs; and precisely whose identity we are talking about. In other words: while it is not difficult to agree that identity was ‘constructed’ and not something that was static through history, it is far more difficult to gain any clarity on the manner of its construction and the factors that conditioned how it was constructed. It is also extremely hard even to be sure what precisely the identity was that was being constructed.

A further key component of ethnogenesis theory is (or at least used to be) that the material presented in the extant narratives, while constructed for contemporary purposes, also contained a ‘Traditionskern’ (‘kernel of tradition’), which was indeed ancient, and transmitted over the generations some

how much grief is caused to modern scholars by the contours of the debate. In this context, see already Graus (1975): 240–393.

42 For discussions of the concept of ethnogenesis in the context of theories regarding ethnic identities among non-Germanic peoples, see e.g. Berend, Urbańczyk, and Wiszewski (2014): 61–81; Curta (2001): 18–35; and Curta (2005).

43 Amory’s work does not present itself as explicitly in support of ethnogenesis theory, and is in fact quite critical; see Amory (1997): 34–9; 306–7; and for the claim that this book uses the ethnogenesis “approach”, see Gillett (2009): 408. Nevertheless, it is fair to state that Amory certainly views identity as a ‘situational construct’, though in fact he sees it as far more flexible and fluid than most exponents of ethnogenesis theory.

authentic ethnic memory comprising legendary matter about ancestors and their heroic deeds, and was borne by members of a core group. The ‘Traditionskern’ was not, however, tied to race, and the identity contained in it transferred outwards from members of the core group to others who assimilated to it, often from completely different ethnic backgrounds. What bound this group together in a common ethnic identity was thus a common adherence to a particular narrative of origins.

This theory has been extensively debated; this is not the place to enter into the discussion in any detail.⁴⁴ To my mind the principal flaw in ethnogenesis theory (at least in its more detailed and ambitious iterations) is precisely the attempt to arrive at broadly valid conclusions about the nature of ethnic identity when the extant source base provides too little evidence for any such conclusions: the existence of narratives of origins does not really provide us with a guide to how to interpret them or understand their significance among any contemporary audience; in most cases, we do not even know who the audience was. This problem in the use of ethnogenesis theory is sometimes compounded by resorting to rather dubious sorts of evidence from much later to shore up the case for interpreting the early sources in a particular manner.

Beyond the fact that there is far too little evidence to form the basis of a theory that aims (at least in some iterations) to be as comprehensive and cogent as this one, there are two points that are most pertinent to the arguments of this monograph. The first concerns the existence and significance of the ‘Traditionskern’; the second, the extent to which there was any ‘Germanic’ identity in this period, and the legitimacy of using material from one ‘Germanic’ source to interpret another. It will be argued in the following chapters that many of the texts that presented ‘national’ histories did indeed draw on oral sources of some sort, but also that we know too little about these sources and their provenance to dignify them with the term ‘Traditionskern’ in the sense meant by the proponents of ethnogenesis theory. It is impossible to know how ancient or unchanging any of this material was, and it is equally impossible to discern the extent to which it served as a motor of identity-formation—even

44 For extensive and severe critiques, see Gillett (ed. 2002), along with the response from Pohl (2002). For less polemical but nevertheless critical appraisals of ethnogenesis theory and what can be known of early medieval identity, see Halsall (2007): 455–82; and James (2009): 102–11. Goetz has made some useful, rather non-committal contributions to the discussion of many of these issues, with regard specifically to the Frankish kingdom: Goetz (2003a); Goetz (2003b); Goetz (2004). In addition, the essays in Mitchell and Greatrex (eds 2000), and Mathisen and Shanzer (eds 2011), also provide counterpoints that are not (or at least not explicitly) of the ‘Toronto/Goffart School’.

within the contexts of the texts within which these oral-derived narratives are transmitted, let alone more generally among the supposed ethnic group whose tradition these narratives are supposed to reproduce.

With regard to 'Germanic' identity, even the current proponents of the ethnogenesis theory would agree (I hope) that there was really no such thing in this period. Although it is true that narratives concerning one Germanic-speaking people are often (much later) preserved by another, I shall argue below that in fact we only begin to see some evidence of an awareness of specifically *linguistic* kinship rather late in this period, and even that has little to do with any sense of a shared cultural or ethnic identity of any sort; furthermore, it is only because of the language that the extant narratives are preserved, not because of any sense that they belonged to a specifically 'Germanic', common inheritance.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, there is a case to be made—or at least to be answered—for a 'Germanic' heroic age and its influence on later material: the extant vernacular (and much later) texts do, after all, almost invariably concern events that, insofar as they have a genuinely historical antecedent, took place in precisely the period known to earlier scholarship as the 'migration age' or 'Völkerwanderungszeit'; and even where, as in a poem such as *Widsith*, all we get are names, when it is Germanic-speakers who are mentioned (and not all the names are of Germanic-speakers!), these are generally persons who, insofar as they have a genuine historical antecedent, also lived in the 'Völkerwanderungszeit'. These were the years between c.300 and c.600, when 'Germanic' peoples came into extensive, increasing, and often violent contact with Rome, and eventually established their own post-imperial kingdoms.⁴⁶ But the later existence in Germanic vernaculars of narratives about events that took place during these centuries does not necessarily tell us anything at all about this period and the cultural identities of the

45 This point was already made with the example of the Burgundians in Ghosh (2007): 247–52.

46 The concept of the 'Völkerwanderungszeit' has itself been severely called into question in the past decades, and for many scholars completely discredited. It is certainly a fact that some amount of migration did take place, though the significance of this fact, and whether it should be allowed to characterise our view of a whole period, is a problem that is still debated. For a recent spirited reassertion of the importance of migration in the shaping of late antiquity (and indeed the middle ages that followed altogether) that is rather more sophisticated than the earlier 'Völkerwanderungszeit' theories, and is much nourished by more recent theories of migration in modern contexts, see Heather (2009); cf. however Goffart (2006); Halsall (2007); Halsall (2014); and James (2009): 174–92, for other views on the extent, nature, importance, chronology, causes, and consequences of migration.

people these narratives are about; and thus a great deal of caution is required in disentangling the threads of what ought to be a healthy collaboration between philology, literary scholarship, and history. Although one should not make too much of the similarities of some aspects of ethnogenesis theory (at least in some versions) to the discipline of Germanic philology, it is certainly the case that its exponents have sometimes relied on the presence of Germanic names and legendary or heroic material contained in later vernacular sources, just as literary scholars have plundered the earlier (Latin) narrative material to find the historical background for those later vernacular tales; and like the philologists, some historians have not been averse to taking the existence of narratives about one people (the Burgundians, for example) in the vernacular of another (Icelanders, for example) as indicative of the existence or memory of some sort of 'Germanic antiquity', or at the very least some sort of basic linkage across early Germanic cultures—sufficient, at any rate, to make it legitimate to use later sources in a Germanic language to interpret the culture of earlier peoples who spoke a Germanic language.⁴⁷

I see no reason to reject the view that the contact with Rome was of epochal significance for various extra-Roman peoples of the period c.300–c.600, including many who spoke Germanic languages, though it was not equally significant for all Germanic-speakers, nor exclusively for Germanic-speakers; and I must stress that many Germanic-speakers who preserved narratives of this period—thirteenth-century Icelanders, for example—were far less affected by this encounter with Rome than the subjects of those narratives—fifth-century Burgundians, for example. Nor do I reject the likelihood that some historical events of this period were indeed commemorated in oral material, probably even a formal 'oral tradition',⁴⁸ nor even the probability that the later extant

47 There is a danger in this procedure in that philologists and literary historians quite justifiably tend to contextualise their work on the basis of historical scholarship, so that when some aspects of that historical scholarship are themselves—equally justifiably—based on the judgements of philologists and literary scholars, a kind of circularity is produced that can be hard to break out of.

48 'Oral tradition' is a term I shall use rarely in the following pages; when I do use this phrase, I refer to a formal historical tradition, normally in verse, cultivated by persons in some manner skilled in reciting and/or composing memorial narratives. By 'formal' in this context, I mean that the narratives, while not necessarily stable from a modern point of view, were—unless about the immediate past—thought to be authentically ancient, with some value deriving from their antiquity, and therefore were thought to remain stable in some way, and arguably, even by modern standards, might have retained a stable core. Generally, I prefer phrases like 'oral sources' or 'oral material', by which I mean matter that was not written, but was not necessarily considered ancient, nor necessarily belonged to

vernacular poetry derives in some manner from this earlier oral tradition. However, I must stress that we have no knowledge—and no way of increasing our knowledge—of what exactly this oral tradition might have contained; how, at any given point, it related to its past, functioned within its present, and was transmitted further into the future; how and whether the content of this oral tradition changed over time; and why certain stories survived and others did not. We also know little of the relationship between any formal oral tradition on the one hand, and both written texts and more informal oral material of various kinds on the other. Furthermore, by the time we get to the written vernacular texts, most of which survive only from manuscripts of the twelfth and thirteenth century (or indeed later), all the places where this material was preserved had been thoroughly imbued with both Latinity and Christianity; this is true equally with regard to the few earlier survivals, as we shall see below. This should not, I hasten to add, lead us to believe that the later vernacular stories were derived from a reading of, for example, Jordanes; there is no evidence for that whatsoever.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, this fact is, I believe, more than enough reason to disallow the use of later sources to understand material from the earlier period; and therefore ambitious statements regarding the ‘oral culture of the barbarians’ and how it might relate to the nature of the ‘heroic age’, and the meaning of this ‘heroic age’ in constituting any kind of ‘Germanic’ identity in our period (or later), are best avoided, since they can only be based on the thinnest and most tenuous of evidence.⁵⁰

While acknowledging the tremendous industry displayed in the vast body of work on early medieval ethnic identity, the great erudition of those who

any sort of prized memorial tradition; such matter could be derived from written sources, but garbled in the course of person-to-person oral transmission; it could be court gossip, travellers’ anecdotes, the oral explications of a text by a teacher, and so on. For a useful study of the interaction between a Latin education and these kinds of informal orality, see Innes (1998) on Notker I of St Gall. The standard handbook on various kinds of oral tradition is Vansina (1985), who, however, includes “historical gossip” in his definition of oral tradition; for a broader survey of medieval orality, see most recently Reichl (2012). Kuhn (1961) argues that historical and heroic narratives could and did exist outside formal traditions, but still operates with excessively schematised notions of lay, legend, and heroic narrative.

49 This point is discussed further in Chapter 7 below.

50 Apart from Chapter 7 below, see also the detailed discussion of these points in Ghosh (2007); see further the useful and more thorough and theoretical critical musings of František Graus regarding what can and cannot be known of historical traditions, and the limits of speculation: Graus (1975): 1–28, *et passim*. For a more positive view of how much can be known of the ‘oral culture of the barbarians’, cf. Richter (1994).

have produced it, and indeed even the manifold usefulness of that scholarship in many respects, my own views tend more towards those of, for example, Timothy Reuter and Susan Reynolds, namely that we cannot know very much; and that what we can know suggests that we need to operate with far more flexible (and cautious) means of analysis than has normally been the case—on any side of the great divides in the scholarship.⁵¹ Particularly given the number of studies that have been devoted to ethnic and other forms of identity in this period, it seems to me worth repeating (as Reuter cogently and elegantly suggested) that in fact we know (and can know) very little about what people actually felt about their own ethnicity and/or identity—astoundingly little, given the number of quite detailed and erudite claims made about ethnic identity in this period. It is worth recalling also that the written material until the sixth century was invariably produced by Romans presenting a perspective that was also largely Roman; and even the later works are written in Latin by (Catholic) Christian writers, which means at the very least that whatever is contained in these works, it is not undiluted barbarian matter.

The extent to which any of this material is representative of a broader sense of ethnic identity cannot be determined, and it seems to me prudent not to make over-confident claims in this respect. The main extant kinds of written sources that might provide some information about identity are law-codes and narratives; both are highly problematic genres in many respects, and all the texts available to us are thoroughly infused with Roman-ness in one way or another. At a broader level, we know almost nothing about most people—even most elite people—in the post-imperial kingdoms: at most, we have a name, a profession, and sometimes a religious affiliation and the name of some other family member. To hang on this minimal information interpretations about ethnic identity and what it meant takes us into the realm of pure speculation, backed up by almost no fact.⁵²

51 See Reuter (2006b); and Reynolds (1998); both provide judicious and unpartisan discussions of the issues; see in addition James (2009): 102–28, *et passim*; and Wickham (2012).

52 The complexities involved in trying to ascertain people's identities are demonstrated in the case studies of Amory (1997), and Koch (2012), on Ostrogothic Italy and Visigothic Spain respectively; see further Amory (1993), and Amory (1994) on the Burgundians. For a recent discussion of the limits of archaeological evidence with regard to ethnic identity, see Halsall (2011). The extent and limits of what can be known about a broader population base beyond members of a royal family are presented in Amory's prosopography of Goths and potential Goths in Ostrogothic Italy: Amory (1997): 348–486; note that rather more information survives for this post-imperial kingdom than most others, and as Amory demonstrates, it is still woefully insufficient for any sort of conclusiveness in most cases.

In light of the foregoing remarks, it will not come as a surprise to readers of the present work that I offer no grand theory regarding ethnic or national identity and historical consciousness as manifest in origin narratives or other narratives about the barbarian past. My effort is rather to interpret the texts on their own terms, without making broader claims regarding how representative they might be of any larger, widely-held notions of identity. That there are certain common elements or approaches across a wide range of texts is suggestive, and the implications of this point will be discussed further in the concluding chapter of this monograph. Let it be said already, however, that the commonalities point, in my view, not to a common sense of 'Germanic' identity, nor to the establishment of distinct and discrete ethnic identities based on origin narratives, but rather to similar strategies for dealing with cultural inheritances that were heterogenous and complex, and the use, perhaps, of origin narratives to bolster a sense of political cohesion that need not have had very much to do with most people's sense of their own identity.

For the moment, the main point to be established is that each text needs to be read as an artefact that makes certain statements and takes certain positions, but we can have little or no knowledge regarding the broader validity and acceptance of what we can discern from these texts within the societies in which they were produced. It seems to me undeniable that these texts were indeed making an effort at some sort of representation and preservation of a group identity; but, equally, it is impossible to discern precisely whose group identity that was, and how representative these texts were of contemporary self-perceptions of ethnic or other forms of identity.

It has been plausibly suggested that origin narratives and stories about the distant past can contribute to a notion of identity, in that they can provide a particular group with a narrative of where it came from, and how it reached its present geographical, temporal, political, and social location; by sharing in this narrative as a collective a sense of group cohesion can be fostered.⁵³ Equally, it has been argued that narratives of the distant past, because they provide the stories of the origins of present, can serve as a means of conferring legitimacy to claims to power in that present.⁵⁴ Certainly it is likely that it is precisely because of this value of the past that the 'national' histories examined below were important enough to be written down; the fact that we do not find efforts simply to assimilate all aspects of the Catholic, Latinate, and in many respects

53 Coumert (2007): 9; see further Neville (2001), who suggests, drawing on Andersen (2006), that medieval narratives of origins were efforts to create 'imagined communities' by means of a narrative of shared origins.

54 Assmann (1992): 70–2; Goetz (2000): 187, *et passim*; Plassmann (2006): 22–3.

Romanised present to a Roman and Catholic past shows that for the ruling lay class and at least some of the clergy—those who wrote secular histories—the barbarian aspects of the past were valuable enough to be preserved, and in a manner in which the discontinuity between a pagan or heretic distant past and a Catholic present was glossed over in favour of a narrative that provided a more or less seamless continuity between past and present.⁵⁵

However, an inevitable problem with modern theories about the uses of the past in past societies is that—at least for the period that the present monograph is concerned with—we generally lack the evidence to demonstrate that the past really did serve whatever function we attribute to it. It is almost certainly the case that in the middle ages as in later periods, the past had a ‘social function’ as a kind of ‘cultural memory’ with a political and social role within the society with which that past was identified, and traditions were ‘invented’ in order to shore up precisely this sense of identification. But it is also the case that from this period we normally have just the one text, with little evidence of how it related to other texts that might have had to do with identity and the past, and no evidence whatsoever with regard to how what we read in these individual texts related to actual practices of negotiating identity in the political and social spheres, even just of the elites, let alone society more broadly.⁵⁶ We will see below that in fact, it appears that what is presented in many of these texts might really be ‘invented traditions’; but the function of these inventions, their antiquity and sources, generally remain opaque to us. Thus, in the first instance, these texts are here examined solely as individual texts, and statements about them should not be taken to have any broader significance regarding the function of the past and the nature of national or ethnic identity. I return briefly to these issues, and the possibility of making broader claims regarding early medieval historical consciousness, in the concluding chapter of the present work.

55 As Jan Assmann pointed out, insofar as the narrative of the past is used to constitute a communal identity, this is done by means of stressing both uniqueness—difference from other groups with other communal identities—and continuity, which is achieved by blanking out, wherever possible, transformative breaks in the past: Assmann (1992): 39–40.

56 In addition to Assmann (1992), and Andersen (2006), important theoretical works on these issues include Fentress and Wickham (1992); Graus (1975); Hobsbawm (1972); and Hobsbawm (1983). While these problems do not really apply to Hobsbawm’s work since he deals with periods for which there is more evidence, they are not addressed in a manner in the other works that is quite satisfactory enough, to my mind, to allow the theories to be applied easily to the texts examined below.

Historical Writing in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages

Each of the texts examined below belonged within a quite specific historical and historiographical context, beyond the general context presented in the previous pages; this will be briefly introduced at the beginning of each of the following chapters. These texts also need to be set against the background of the traditions of secular and Christian historical writing in late antiquity, as this was the historiographical inheritance that influenced, more broadly, the traditions of historical writing and the understanding of the past in the early middle ages, within which context our texts must be understood.

In this section of the present chapter, I provide a brief, general overview of Latin historiography in this period.⁵⁷ Although the division is somewhat schematic, the main forms of historical writing can be grouped into the broad categories of universal histories and world chronicles, which encompassed secular and religious matter on a large scale; ecclesiastical histories, which focused on religious communities; and secular histories.

Universal Histories and World Chronicles

Universal histories and world chronicles aimed to portray the history of all peoples from creation to the present. The most influential in the Latin west were the chronicle of Eusebius, in its modified form in Jerome's Latin translation (c.380), and the *Historiae adversus paganos* of Orosius (c.417). The Eusebius–Jerome chronicle comprises short entries under each year, giving brief notices of events from all over the world. These are often drawn from other sources, and are selected with the particular theological significance of the structure of world

57 Useful surveys approaching the early medieval traditions of historiography and their late antique heritage from different perspectives are provided by Allen (2003), Bonamente (2003), Croke (2012), Ray (1974), Winkelmann (2003), and Woods (2009); a broader context for the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries is given by Rohrbacher (2002), and the essays collected in Marasco (ed. 2003). On the novelty of a 'Christian' historiography in late antiquity, see further Momigliano (1963). For very useful analyses of late antique Latin Christian reactions to Roman history and historiographical traditions, see Inglebert (1996), and Inglebert (2001): 289–554. For a comparative study of pagan and Christian approaches to historical writing and the ancient history of Rome, see Sehlmeier (2009). In the following, I cover the Latin traditions only, since apart from Jordanes, none of the texts discussed below betrays much awareness of Greek historiography. See, however, the relevant chapters in Marasco (ed. 2003); in addition, for the principal relevant historians, see Blockley (1981); Cameron (1985); Kaldellis (2004); Paschoud (1975); Paschoud (2006); Rohrbacher (2002): 64–92; 108–34; and the studies of Inglebert already cited.

history in mind.⁵⁸ There were a number of continuations in the fifth and sixth centuries, and the chronicles were well-known, and widely read and copied.⁵⁹ Isidore of Seville, and later Bede, produced both world chronicles as well as more specific histories concerned with individual regions. The Fredegar chronicle also starts off as a continuation of Eusebius–Jerome, and only in the latter parts begins to be independent; even so, it retains something of the character of a chronicle, though now distinctly less universal. The chronicle tradition, while not otherwise particularly influential in any direct manner on the texts examined below, was certainly one of the most prominent forms of historical writing throughout the early middle ages, and was thus one of the fundamental pillars of the historical consciousness of literate people in the period.⁶⁰

The universal history as exemplified by the work of Orosius did not present a synoptic view of the past. Rather, it followed particular great empires of antiquity from their rise to their fall, and Orosius formulated a theological conception of historical change according to which power is transferred from one empire to another until reaching its final, highest point in Rome. For Orosius, Rome was the natural culmination of the progress of political and cultural development, and the truth of this notion is supported by the fact that Christ was born in the Roman empire and a Roman citizen.⁶¹ Orosius, far more effectively than Eusebius–Jerome, formulated an idea of history in which political power and religious salvation were inextricably linked, and also developed the concept of a Christian ‘*translatio imperii*’ (the transfer of legitimate imperial rule from one empire to another). This allowed later authors to compose histories of post-imperial kingdoms and empires that nevertheless fulfilled a key

58 Zecchini (2003): 318–19. On Eusebius and his context, see further Burgess and Kulikowski (2013): 96–126; and Winkelmann (2003): 3–10; 18–31.

59 On the Eusebius–Jerome chronicle and reactions to it in Latin Christianity up to the chronicle of Sulpicius (written c.405), see the overview in Burgess and Kulikowski (2013): 119–31; for a more detailed analysis, see Inglebert (1996): 153–295; 357–93. On the chronicle tradition in the fifth century, see Muhlberger (1990). On sixth-century chronicles, see Croke (2001); Favrod (ed. 1993): 11–60; Markus (1986).

60 For the chronicle tradition up to the twelfth century, von den Brincken’s survey remains indispensable, along with the more recent work of Burgess and Kulikowski, which provides greater detail regarding the antique and Mediterranean origins of the genre: von den Brincken (1957); Burgess and Kulikowski (2013).

61 He is called ‘*ciuis Romanus*’ twice: Orosius: VI.xxii,8; VIII.iii,4. Fundamental studies of Orosius are Goetz (1980a), and Inglebert (1996): 507–89; and in addition the more recent work of van Nuffelen (2012), who sees Orosius’s historical thought in a less purely theological light than Goetz and Inglebert (but cf. Goetz 2014). Brief surveys are provided in Rohrbacher (2002): 135–49, and Zecchini (2003): 319–29.

role in salvation history, following the model of Rome in Orosius's presentation. Orosius's history was one of the most widely read historical works throughout the middle ages, with many imitators, continuators, and writers who drew profusely on him;⁶² the authors of all the Latin texts analysed below seem to have been familiar with at least some part of his work. (This might not be true of the *Waltharius*-poet, but given both how widely Orosius was read and copied, and this poet's erudition, the above statement probably applies in this case too.) Yet unlike the narratives examined here, Orosius's ultimate aim was to formulate a concept of salvation history in which even the political aspect of the past was subordinate to its religious significance. In this respect not least, his universal history is fundamentally different from most of the texts examined in the present study (Isidore's Gothic history is something of an exception to this statement), in which salvation history appears hardly to play any part at all.

Ecclesiastical Histories

Ecclesiastical histories aimed to depict the history of the Christian Church in the broadest sense, namely as a community of believers; although, in varying degrees, political history was also included, it was subordinate to the larger plan of salvation history, and was often incorporated only insofar as it had directly to do with matters of religion and the hierarchy of the Church. Although there were a number of later Greek ecclesiastical histories, it is Eusebius, once again, who provided the impetus for later writers with his *Historia ecclesiastica*, which was widely known in the Latin west in Rufinus's Latin adaptation.⁶³ Perhaps the most outstanding example of this genre from the early middle ages is Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (*HE*; c.731), which, although it has a regional focus on England and does include political events as well, focuses on conversion narratives, the institutional history of the Church in England, and stories of holy men of various stripes.⁶⁴ Gregory of Tours's *Decem libri historiarum* (*DLH*; c.590–4) are not an ecclesiastical history in the Bedan sense, and Gregory includes a wide variety of manifestly profane narratives. But his work too is, at its core, concerned with the community of believers and the fate of

62 von den Brincken (1957): 80–6; Goetz (1980a): 148–65; Hillgarth (1992); Werner (1987).

63 Winkelman (2003): 3–10; 18–31 (on Eusebius); Inglebert (1996): 325–55; Rohrbacher (2002): 93–107 (Rufinus).

64 Fundamental studies of Bede: Goffart (1988): 235–328; and Higham (2006); for a historical (but not theological) commentary, see Wallace-Hadrill (1988); for the broader context, see the essays in DeGregorio (ed. 2010). See also the further references cited in the first section of Chapter 6.

their faith, rather than with politics; secular history is included more as a means of illustrating the ills of a worldly life than for its own intrinsic interest.⁶⁵ Both Gregory and Bede were widely read during the whole of our period.⁶⁶

Ecclesiastical histories intended to establish the historical inevitability of Christianity and prove a particular theological point, which normally hinged on the eventual conversion to Christianity of all humanity, and pointed the way forward to the Last Judgement; in this sense, they had much in common with the theological conception of history in Orosius. They differed in the relative narrowness of the subject matter they covered, not just in terms of its ecclesiastical focus, but also because these works tended to focus on the history of one nation or region; they had no pretensions to being 'universal' histories, and thus could—as in the case of both Bede and Gregory—appear to have some characteristics of 'national' histories.

Secular Histories in Late Antiquity

While ecclesiastical histories and chronicles generally provided a specifically Christian view of the past (though the extent to and manner in which this shaped the narrative could vary widely), this period also saw the production of a number of secular histories. These were perhaps less influential in that they were less widely read, but some, such as the *Breviarum* of Eutropius, evidently did also provide important models for later authors within the period. These texts were, naturally enough, concerned with the history of Rome, and ranged from those that covered the whole period from its founding to the historians' present (the minor Latin historians of the fourth century), through the more expansive imperial biographies of the *Historia Augusta*, to the voluminous Tacitean 'Zeitgeschichte' of Ammianus Marcellinus. Also produced in this period was a short narrative about Roman origins, the *Origo gentis Romanae*, which, in its mingling of varied kinds of sources ranging from what seem to be mythical to more factual accounts, appears to be in some ways comparable to some of the 'national' histories to be discussed below.

There are four brief histories of Rome from the second half of the fourth century that appear to draw on common sources and on each other, of which

65 Fundamental for Gregory: Heinzelmann (1994b); for an important alternative reading, see Goffart (1988): 112–234; further references are given below in Chapter 3.

66 On the dissemination of *HE*: Colgrave and Mynors (ed. and trans. 1969): xxxix–lxx; Lapidge (2006): 119; 138; 142; 145; 149; 154; 166; 234; 238; 240; 243; 248; 255; 268; Crépin (2005): 50–60; 67–8. On the dissemination of *DLH*: Goffart (1987); Heinzelmann (1994b): 167–75; Lapidge (2006): 212; 259; 305; McKitterick (2004b): 152; Reimitz (2003); on his use by Fredegar, the *LHF* and Paul, see the apparatus in the respective editions, and Chapters 3–4 below.

Eutropius's *Breviarum ab urbe condita* seems to have been the best known for the period under consideration in this monograph.⁶⁷ This text is, as the title indicates, a brief history of the Roman state from Romulus down to 364, and was written c.369.⁶⁸ Not long before, Sextus Aurelius Victor—like Eutropius, a career civil servant—had composed his *Liber de Caesaribus*, a history of emperors from 31BC to AD361 (when his work was published); and in c.370, Festus, again a civil servant, composed his *Breviarum*, a shorter work covering the same period as Eutropius's *Breviarum*.⁶⁹ Finally, there is the anonymous *Epitome de Caesaribus* from the end of the fourth century.⁷⁰

A common source for these short histories is believed to be a now lost text known to modern scholarship as the *Kaisergeschichte*, which is also thought to be a source for Jerome's continuation of Eusebius, and is supposed to have been composed at some point in the fourth century. None of these histories have a noticeably prominent religious angle to their narratives; none of them was written by a Christian. All of these works continued to be read; Eutropius's history in particular was used by Jerome and many later Christian historians, and also formed the basis for Paul the Deacon's *Historia Romana* (though Paul added considerably to it). Aurelius Victor and the *Epitome de Caesaribus* seem to have been less well known until the ninth century, but from that point onwards probably did exercise some influence on later Latin writers. None of these histories, however, were as extensively and widely received in our period as either Orosius or the Eusebius–Jerome chronicle. They nevertheless need to be borne in mind as alternative, resolutely non-religious models of historical writing available to later historians: while in terms of the brevity which they cover events they might have something in common with the chronicle tradition, in terms of the approach to history and the choice of material, they are quite different.

67 On the minor Latin historians of the fourth century, in addition to the survey in Bonamente (2003), see den Boer (1972); and Rohrbacher (2002): 42–63.

68 For introductory material on Eutropius, apart from the edition of Santini (ed. 1979); see Bird (trans. 1993): vii–lvii, along with Bird's extensive commentary: 71–164; den Boer (1972): 114–72; Rohrbacher (2002): 49–58.

69 On Aurelius Victor, in addition to the edition of Pichlmayr and Gruendel (eds 1966), see Bird (1984); Bird (trans. 1994): vii–xxx, along with Bird's extensive commentary: 55–207; den Boer (1972): 19–113; Rohrbacher (2002): 42–8. On Festus, see den Boer (1972): 173–223; Eadie (ed. 1967): 1–41, along with Eadie's extensive commentary: 70–153; Rohrbacher (2002): 59–63.

70 On this text, in addition to the edition of Pichlmayr and Gruendel (eds 1966), see Schlumberger (1974).

The other principal secular Latin histories are the *Historia Augusta*, a compilation of imperial biographies from the later fourth century covering the emperors from Hadrian to the sons of Carus, and largely anonymous; and the contemporary history of Ammianus Marcellinus. The *Historia Augusta* has long been a thorn in the side of scholars: it is inconsistent in style and content, as well as in its treatment of different emperors, and it is generally no longer thought to be a particularly reliable historical source; nor is it normally considered to have any particular literary merit.⁷¹ The text's date cannot be firmly determined, with estimates ranging from the 360s to the decade after 395; and even the fourth-century dating is not necessarily secure. It is a work of pagan historiography, a "reaction to Christianity triumphant and intolerant" that showcases the greatness of the pagan and tolerant Roman past as a counterpoint to the intolerant Christian present.⁷² Although there is little evidence that it was used by any of the historians studied below, its existence is an example of yet another way of looking at the past that focused on secular achievement and the biographies of rulers, enlivened by what some modern scholars have suggested is a good dose of fiction.

Ammianus Marcellinus, in contrast, has been seen as an exceptionally factual, sober historian of his own time. He also has his bias, of course, which is not a Christian one—though precisely what the attitude of his *Res gestae* to the new religion is remains a matter of some dispute.⁷³ A Greek-speaker himself, Ammianus chose to write his *Res gestae* in Latin. The extant text begins in 353 and extends to 390; the first thirteen books have been lost, but Ammianus says that he presented a history from the principate of Nerva onwards.⁷⁴ Ammianus was an administrator and staff officer posted in various parts of the Roman empire; despite his own personal experience, he often appears to have drawn on written sources for his descriptions rather than presenting an eyewitness account.

Because of the period in which he wrote, he is naturally an especially informative source for contact and conflict with various barbarian groups, and he is particularly useful as providing the principal contemporary narratives concerning

71 On the *Historia Augusta*, in addition to the edition of Hohl, Samberger, and Seyfarth, see the introductory survey in Birley (2003); see further especially the fundamental studies of Barnes (1978); Syme (1968); and Syme (1971).

72 Birley (2003): 144.

73 There is a vast body of work on Ammianus, and there appears often to be very little consensus. For introductions, see Sabbah (2003); and Rohrbacher (2002): 14–41; see further the important studies of Barnes (1998); Blockley (1975); Demandt (1965); Kelly (2008); Matthews (1989); and Syme (1968).

74 Ammianus: xxxi.xvi, 9.

the Goths at a time when they were having an ever-greater impact on the empire, as well as being the earliest real source for Gothic history that is likely to be in any manner reliable; Ammianus can indeed be used as a check against some aspects of Jordanes's narrative of the same period.⁷⁵ Like the histories of Tacitus, Ammianus's history is formulated in a rather dense Latin, and like Tacitus, he has much to say about Roman contacts and conflicts with barbarians. Ammianus has therefore, like Tacitus, been much utilised by modern scholars interested in barbarians. Like Tacitus once again, it is hard to know both just how accurate he is about the barbarians, and just how much influence his work had on historians in the following four centuries: there is little evidence of direct use. As his *Res gestae* are 'Zeitgeschichte' rather than an origin narrative, they are of little immediate relevance to our understanding of how the distant past was treated by the later 'national' histories.

In contrast, the *Origo gentis Romanae* was explicitly about the distant past. It is a rather unusual text that exists only from fifteenth-century manuscripts, but was apparently composed in the late fourth century and provides a narrative of Roman origins based both on Virgil and on other sources, not all of which have as yet been properly identified.⁷⁶ Unlike some of the other works just discussed, this text has attracted relatively little attention in the scholarship, and seems not to have excited the imagination of any of the many scholars dealing with later narratives of barbarian (as opposed to Roman) origins.⁷⁷

Presenting as it does a rather heterogeneous use of sources and a combination of what seem to be both more factual and more fictional elements, it might be a useful comparandum as a specifically *Roman* prose narrative of origins that, even if no direct influence can be shown, might nevertheless be well worth studying alongside the many stories of barbarian origins that are extant. In particular, it is a demonstration that not just early medieval barbarians, but also non-Christian Romans in late antiquity were interested in a mythologising prose narrative of origins that synthesised a number of different and not always harmonious versions of the distant past, and thereby

75 References to some of the relevant passages are provided in the next chapter; for Ammianus's value regarding the Alamanni, another contemporary barbarian group frequently in conflict with Rome, see Zotz (1998).

76 On this text, in addition to the edition of Pichlmayr and Gruendel (eds 1966), see most recently the extensive material in Sehlmeier (ed. and trans. 2004): 7–27; 65–160; and the discussion in the context of its place among other contemporary histories in Sehlmeier (2009): *passim*; see further Momigliano (1958); and Christopher Smith (2005).

77 See, however, the brief comments of Pohl (2014): 410–11; 413; this paper appeared after the paragraphs above had already been written.

encompassed many elements that do not seem to ‘fit’ with the rest of the narrative, but seem nevertheless clearly to derive from written rather than oral sources. It is also a demonstration that the sort of eclectic manner of collecting material relating to ‘ethnic’ or ‘national’ origins that we find in, *inter alia*, Jordanes’s Gothic history, was by no means invented by or unique to the authors of the later ‘national’ histories of what had earlier been barbarian peoples.⁷⁸

By the fifth century, therefore, there was a wide range of more or less well-known narratives, providing a number of different models for how history could and should be written. With the exception of the *Breviarium* of Eutropius (and to a lesser extent that of Festus), most of the historical narratives extant from late antiquity that were widely received and served as models in the early middle ages followed the paradigms either of ecclesiastical history, or universal history or world chronicle; the most well-known models for historical writing were thus dominated by the perspective of salvation history, and this perspective is accordingly shared by the majority of early medieval histories.

Although they do not exclude religion, the authors even of the Latin histories to be considered below—Jordanes, Isidore, Fredegar, the *LHF*-author and Paul—seem to be more concerned simply with providing a secular narrative from the distant past to the present or very recent past, without really considering the way any of this fits into the perspective of salvation history.⁷⁹ They are thus perhaps more akin to the *Historia Augusta* in its form as serial biography and the *Origo gentis Romanae* in its quest for (what appear to us to be mythical) origins cobbled together apparently indiscriminately from a variety of sources. Somewhat frustratingly, however, there seems to be little evidence that either of these texts were indeed read by the authors of the works to be examined below; Eutropius’s *Breviarum* was more widely known, but in terms of style, form, and historical ideology appears not to have had as much influence as the text’s dissemination might suggest, except insofar as it tends to avoid religious issues.

The differences between the histories to be examined below and those just discussed notwithstanding, there are a few points to be made regarding the inheritance that the latter group of texts represent. To begin with, let me reiterate that we should always be aware that there was a broad palette of approaches

78 I am grateful to Sandy Murray for alerting me to the existence and possible significance of this text.

79 Although Isidore does appear to present the Goths within the framework of salvation history, this aspect is not prominent in his historical works, unlike in his other writings.

to the past among later Roman historians writing in Latin, and it should not surprise us therefore that early medieval approaches to the past could be equally varied. While it is true that the challenges faced by early medieval historians were different at least in one respect—late Roman authors did not have to try and integrate a barbarian past (with little written material about it at least in its furthest reaches) with a Roman inheritance, and could rely on extensive written sources for the early history of Rome—there was also one basic challenge that they shared with the Christian Roman historians of the fourth and fifth centuries (and indeed earlier), namely the need to integrate a pre-Christian past, and indeed a pre-Christian cultural heritage inherent in the very language in which the texts were written, with a Christian present.⁸⁰

This was a task approached in different ways, but one aspect common to most Christian histories was an effort to stress the providential place within Christian history of the people or polity that was the focus of the history being written. Such a focus on salvation history is not to be found in most of our 'national' histories; nevertheless, one lesson that the authors of the latter texts might have learnt was the importance of papering over the cracks that could appear from too close a scrutiny of the differences between the pagan past and the Christian present. One of the methods of harmonising past and present was euhemerism: although originating in pre-Christian thought as a means of interpreting pagan myths, euhemerism—an interpretation of gods as exceptional humans who were worshipped as deities—was adopted by some Christians in late antiquity as a method of explaining the worship of pagan gods, and continued to be employed by some Christian writers throughout the middle ages. From the beginning of its use by Christian writers, euhemerism could be applied with a simply historicising and thereby often apologetic function, without moral critique; it could, however, equally well be used as a means of explicitly denigrating pagan practices and the pagan past.⁸¹

The salvific aspect of history, a focus on which was one of the principal means by which the authors of ecclesiastical histories were able to pass over potential breaks between past and present, was not prominent in the later

80 Admittedly, for Christian Roman historians, the problem was arguably less a matter of legitimising Roman rule, and more a question of not wanting to abandon Roman culture.

81 For basic introductions, see Cooke (1927); Orchard (1997): 101–4; von See (1989); and Thraede (1966). See more broadly Inglebert (1996), for studies of how individual Christian Roman historians approached the problems posed by the pre-Christian Roman past; the earliest Christian writers to present a euhemeristic reading of that past were Minucius Felix (late second or early third century) and Lactantius (c.250–c.325) (Inglebert 1996: 105–44). On the relevance of this point for Jordanes, for example, see Chapter 2 at n. 90.

'national' histories. Yet it is possible, indeed likely, that the authors of the latter learnt just as much from their more religiously-oriented predecessors as from the secular or pagan historians of late antiquity—and in fact probably more. Arguably, their task was in some respects to produce a synthesis of both approaches: to provide a secular history of a people that had formed a polity, and to do so from the origins of that people to the present in a manner that portrayed the present in a flattering light, and therefore could not present too negative an image of the past; but also, precisely because of this last requirement, to provide a history that would not offend the current religious sensibilities because of the difference in religion in the past. Unlike late antique Christian historians, who had to find a way of coming to terms only with the non-Christian aspect of their Roman cultural inheritance, but not with the language or medium *per se* in which the rest of that inheritance was transmitted, the historians of the post-imperial, barbarian kingdoms had to harmonise their current, Romanised, Christian, Latin present with a barbarian past that had not already been through a process of assimilation in the Latin written word to the Roman inheritance.

In the following chapters I shall argue that the 'national' histories I examine were written as a means of recording and codifying a narrative of the distant past that established a continuity between that distant past and the present. This sense of continuity was arguably important to the secular aristocracy, since, despite the fact that the distant past was pagan or heretic, continuity with ancestral greatness was one of the principal means of legitimising rule in the present. Because of this lay interest, therefore, narratives about this distant past were sufficiently important that they needed to be recorded in the now authoritative medium of Latin writing.

But the impulse for writing these texts did not simply emanate from the secular aristocracy: the existence of these Latin 'national' histories also shows how closely related were the spheres of Church and court, and furthermore, it demonstrates that it was acceptable to present aspects of the distant past not related to religion in a positive light, as long as ways could be found to diminish the presence of elements of that past that could have been interpreted as opposed Christianity. In the person of Isidore especially, but also to differing extents in the other cases presented below, it could be argued that the interests of Church and state were so closely related that a stress on continuities rather than religious difference was probably as important to at least some members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy as to the secular aristocracy; and in any case the former were invariably linked to the latter by ties of blood.

Because writing, with the partial exception of administrative literacy, was dominated by the Church in our period, the bias of most extant written sources

leans heavily towards clerical attitudes, which were conditioned to a much greater degree by concerns of religion and religious morality. With the exception of the texts examined in this book, it is only from around the turn of the millennium, and in some parts of western Europe from considerably later, that we begin to find in any significant quantity narrative literature that gives expression *primarily* to a lay culture and historical consciousness: for most of the early middle ages, there was scarcely any written cultural production that was essentially of a secular nature. (I exclude here administrative and documentary material.)

Nevertheless, two final points must be noted here, which will recur throughout the following pages. The first is that there was no great gulf between the ecclesiastical and lay aristocracy: from the very beginnings of the medieval period, senior churchmen were closely linked with secular affairs, from urban administration to military service; the clergy were often expected to commemorate members of the secular aristocracy; and it was common for at least one if not more members of lay aristocratic families to join the Church at an early age: thus the ecclesiastical and lay hierarchies were literally linked by blood.⁸²

The second important point is that although the bulk of the written evidence that survives betrays a marked ecclesiastical bias, we cannot assume that no secular education or culture existed: there was a large lay aristocracy, which was certainly closely connected to and influenced by the Church, but would have had some kind of lay education (in, among other things, the arts of war and politics), and secular values that we cannot assume would have been identical to those of the Church. This is a further significant difference in context between the secular Latin histories reviewed in the previous pages, and the works to be examined below: late antique secular Latin histories were written for and embedded within a lay culture just as much as early medieval secular histories were; but it was (at least with regard to the elites) a highly literate secular culture, within which the written and Latin cultural heritage was

82 The literature on secular aspects of the early medieval Church is vast; see, in general, Wickham (2009): 184–90. The following is a very small sample of important studies on more specific issues: on episcopal administration and relationship with secular political hierarchies, see Heinzelmann (1988); and Kaiser (1988); on monastic commemoration of secular aristocrats, see Freise (1985); McKitterick (2004b): 162–73; Oexle (1976); Schmid (1965); and Schmid (1979); on military service and the Church, see Prinz (1971); on family relationships between the secular and clerical elites, see Schmid (1965); and Wormald (1978): 49–58; on royal patronage of churches and written, Latin cultural production, see Hen (2007); on these topics and the royal promotion of ecclesiastical reform and particular forms of piety and religious representation, see McKitterick (2008): 292–380.

fundamental.⁸³ In contrast, early medieval secular culture (even of the elites) was, to a large extent, not set down in writing; we can know little about it, relative to what we know about religious culture in the same period.

The subjects of the present study are all texts: written material, produced (at least in their its form) in all cases by persons with some form of religious education in Latin. These works are among the relatively few forms of literary evidence both of an independent lay aristocratic culture, and of the extent to which this was influenced by and in turn influenced the culture of the ecclesiastical elite. They constitute, therefore, the principal extant narrative evidence of a secular historical consciousness; they are in some cases a window into a secular culture that lived primarily in an oral context and in the vernacular rather than in Latin writing; and they are also, in all cases, witness to the interaction between the secular and ecclesiastical milieux. They are not, however, anything approaching the totality of expressions of that secular culture, even just with regard to historical consciousness and the distant past; much more must have existed that we can never know about, and our conclusions must therefore be appropriately cautious.

83 On this point, see e.g. Jones (1964): 988–91; 997–1006; 1007–12; 1021–4; and Wickham (2009): 29–31.

The Gothic Histories of Jordanes and Isidore

The *De origine actibusque Getarum* of Jordanes, written in the middle of the sixth century, is the first extant self-conscious history devoted to a barbarian people, and thus the first object of study in the present monograph. The second such text, the *Historia Gothorum* of Isidore of Seville, is similarly devoted to the history of the Goths, but arises out of a completely different context. This chapter thus not only examines the first two extant barbarian ‘national’ histories, but also demonstrates that already in these first two texts there were quite contrasting methods of approaching the problems posed by the barbarian past. The first section of this chapter is introductory, providing an overview of the historical background of Gothic history and contacts with Rome; this is followed by detailed readings of the presentation of the barbarian Gothic past in both histories, in each case preceded by introductory sections on the authors and the context of their works; the chapter concludes with a section comparing the methods and purposes of Jordanes and Isidore.

The Goths and Rome: Historical Background

From the mid-third century, the Goths regularly came into conflict with the border legions of Rome.¹ Unfortunately, most sources that refer to Goths in this period are themselves of a later date, and thus not entirely reliable.² Little is

1 Kulikowski (2007): 18–42; for the broader political background, see Halsall (2007): 71–9.

2 Third-century sources mentioning Goths: the *Canonical Letter* of Gregory Thaumaturgus, bishop of Neocaesarea in Pontus in the mid-third century (*PG* 10: 1020–48; translated in Heather and Matthews, trans. 1991: 5–10; Goths at p. 8); and the fragmentary history of Dexippus (Jacoby, ed. 1926: 452–80; Martin, ed. and trans. 2006), composed c.250–c.280. The existing fragments of Dexippus speak almost always of Scythians (“Σκύθαι”); the one exception is a reference to Scythians who are spoken of as Goths attacking Histria in the reign of Decius (reigned 249–51) (Jacoby, ed. 1926: frag. 22 = Martin, ed. and trans. 2006: frag. 17: “Σκύθαι [...] οἱ λεγόμενοι Γότθοι”). This might indicate that Dexippus distinguishes Goths as a sub-group of Scythians. Dexippus is accepted by Kulikowski as referring to Goths elsewhere where Scythians are mentioned (Kulikowski 2007: 18–19, with reference to [Jacoby] frags 20; 22; 25 [= Martin S7; frags 17; 22]); cf. Christensen (2002): 110–12; 233–34, for scepticism regarding Dexippus. Dexippus was one of the principal sources of Zosimus, who, writing c.500, also refers to Scythians in his accounts of the earliest third-century events that are supposedly drawn from Dexippus and

known about these third-century Goths; nothing is known about their origins, a lack of clarity compounded by the fact that Jordanes's *Getica*, the principal narrative source for Gothic history, dates from the mid-sixth century, and conflates stories of Goths with narratives that in earlier sources refer to Scythians and Dacians, and also to "Gutones" and "Getae", who might have nothing to do with the Goths.³ Reliable contemporary accounts sufficient for a rough narrative history of the Goths only date from the late fourth century; the most important is the history of Ammianus Marcellinus.⁴

thought to refer to Goths (see e.g. Paschoud, ed. and trans. 1971: 1,xxiii; 1,xxx–xxxv; see also Paschoud's note: 146, n. 49). In one passage, Zosimus explicitly distinguishes between Goths and Scythians (Paschoud, ed. and trans. 1971: 1,xlii,1). However, elsewhere he tells us that Claudius (reigned 268–70) defeated *Scythians* in a battle that, according to three *fourth-century* sources, was fought against *Goths*, and earned the emperor the title "Gothicus" (Paschoud, ed. and trans. 1971: 1,xlii–xlili; 1,xliv–xlv); the fourth-century sources are Eutropius (Santini, ed. 1979: IX,11), Aurelius Victor (Pichlmayr and Gruendel, eds 1966: 34), and the *Historia Augusta* (Hohl, Samberger and Seyfarth, eds 1965–71: Claudius, XII,2). The *Historia Augusta* also refers to wars against Goths under Gordian III (reigned 238–44) (Hohl, Samberger and Seyfarth, eds 1965–71: Gordianus Tres, xxxi,1; xxxiv,3). We see thus that although the Goths do indeed first appear in the historical record in the mid-third century, it is far from clear when Scythians are Goths and not Scythians. (Scythians have, of course, a long prior history in classical writings where they were not thought of as Goths.) Other mentions of Goths before the fourth-century histories just cited are the panegyrics on Constantius Chlorus (*Pan. lat.*: VIII[V].x,4) and Constantine (*Pan. lat.*: VI[VII].ii,2).

- 3 Earlier references to peoples with names passably similar to "Goth": Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* (Mayhoff, ed. 1892–1909: IV.xiv,99: "Gutones"; XXXVII.xi,35: "Guinoes"); Tacitus's *Germania* (Ogilvie and Winterbottom, eds 1975: XLIV,1: "Gotones"), and his *Annales* (Heubner, ed. 1983: II,62: "Gotones"); Ptolemy's *Geography* (Stückelberger and Graßhoff, ed. and trans. 2006: III.v,20: "Τύθωνες"). On Jordanes's relation to the early sources, see Christensen (2002): 22–39; 40–1; 47–51; 230–49; and Coumert (2007): 33–7; and see further the discussion below, with additional references at nn. 16, 33, and 36. Jerome (*PL* 28: col. 1000) and Orosius (I.xvi,2) also might confuse Goths and Getae. For a critical account of modern quests for Gothic origins, see Kulikowski (2007): 43–70. Teillet (1984): 17–112 presents a detailed analysis of Goths in Roman letters, but should be approached with some caution due to the imprecise use of terms like "nation" to apply to this period, and an undue reliance on a stark dichotomy between Roman and barbarian.
- 4 On Ammianus as a historical source, see the references given above, Chapter 1, n. 73. Overviews of other sources of Gothic history from the fourth and fifth centuries are given in Christensen (2002): 47–51; 230–49; Coumert (2007): 37–43; Heather (1991): 71–83; and Koch (2012): 34–50. The relevant material for the fourth century is conveniently presented in translation in Heather and Matthews (trans. 1991). For more detailed analysis, see Teillet (1984): 113–60 (on Orosius's depiction of the Goths); 161–252 (on other Roman texts dealing with Goths up to the end of the fifth century).

The existence of more material from this period is due not least to the fact that although there had been periodic conflict between the Romans and people who might have been Goths from the mid-third century, during the reign of Valens in 376 a group of Goths entered the boundaries of the empire, brought about at Adrianople in 378 one of the severest defeats ever suffered by the Roman army, and remained from that period onwards within the empire, and inextricably linked to the history of Rome; Roman historians were now, therefore, naturally interested in Goths.⁵ In 410, a body of Goths sacked Rome, but did not topple the empire, and soon moved into Gaul, where they were employed (as they had been before elsewhere) as Roman federates;⁶ after 418, they were settled in Aquitaine, from where they expanded during the course of the century over southern France and Spain, establishing a kingdom that lasted until its defeat by the Arabs in 711.⁷ Other Goths, who remained in the Balkans in the fourth century, entered into Italy in the late fifth century, led by Theoderic under the authority of the emperor Zeno, and established a kingdom in Italy that was ultimately destroyed by the Romans under Justinian in the mid-sixth century.⁸

Jordanes's *De origine actibusque Getarum* was completed in the immediate aftermath of this defeat, probably in Constantinople; Isidore of Seville's *Historia Gothorum* was written in completely contrasting circumstances, in the early seventh century, when the Visigothic kingdom of Spain had just defeated the last imperial forces in the peninsula. Jordanes's text is significant for providing the first narrative of Gothic origins, and the first extant self-conscious

5 Giese (2004): 16–28; Halsall (2007): 131–6; 170–219; Heather (1991): 84–213; Kulikowski (2007): 71–153.

6 Giese (2004): 29–38; Halsall (2007): 214–17; Heather (1991): 213–24; Kulikowski (2007): 154–84.

7 On the settlement in Gaul and the expansion into Spain, cf. Giese (2004): 41–62; 140–50; Goffart (1980): 103–26; Heather (1996): 181–215; Kulikowski (2001); Mathisen and Sivan (1999); Schwarcz (2001); Schwarcz (2011). On the Visigothic kingdom in the following centuries, see Collins (2004); see also Halsall (2007): 338–46. On Visigothic history within the context of Roman political history in the fifth, and post-imperial history in the sixth century, see Halsall (2007): 220–82; 296–300. Specifically on Gothic and Roman identities in the Visigothic kingdoms, see Koch (2012); see also Hillgarth (2009): 28–55.

8 On the settlement of the Goths in Italy and the trajectory of their kingdom there, cf. Giese (2004): 63–139; Goffart (1980): 58–102; Halsall (2007): 278–93; Heather (1991): 227–308; Heather (1996): 216–58; and most recently Wiemer (2013). For detailed analyses of society, culture, law, and politics in Ostrogothic Italy approaching the problem from varying perspectives, the fundamental most recent works are Amory (1997), Bjornlie (2014), Arnold (2014), and Lafferty (2013).

history devoted to a barbarian people; it is also notable for its possible incorporation of Gothic traditions within the form of a written, Latin history. Isidore apparently uses no Gothic traditions, and has little to say about the origins or distant past of the Goths; but his history is nevertheless of great value as a witness to the methods by which the conjunction of cultures was negotiated in historical narratives in the post-Roman west.

The *De origine actibusque Getarum* of Jordanes: Background and Summary

Jordanes's *Getica*, as it is known to modern scholarship, is probably the most problematic of all the works to be considered in this study: Jordanes's Latin was idiosyncratic at best, and near-incomprehensible at worst; his narrative appears not to have a very coherent structure, and is internally inconsistent in the 'facts' it conveys; and furthermore, given that the Gothic kingdom was in the process of being destroyed by Rome, and that Jordanes was probably writing at Constantinople, or at least in a Roman context, it is extremely unclear why he wrote a history of the Goths which is in many respects highly complimentary of them.⁹ Unlike the other Latin histories we shall examine, which provide narratives of a people while that people still rules an independent kingdom, and while there is thus a clear continuity between the recorded past and its context in the present, it seems unlikely that the Goths in Italy—who are Jordanes's principal subject—could really hope for continuity between the past and the future in terms of political independence and power. The Goths, apart from being in Jordanes's own lifetime the opponents of Rome, the polity clearly supported by Jordanes, were also still largely Arian, whereas Jordanes was clearly orthodox.¹⁰ Nevertheless, although he was indubitably pro-Roman,

9 The most detailed analysis of the complexities Jordanes presents us with is given by Christensen (2002); the most significant other study is Goffart (1988): 20–62. On the historical value of Jordanes, cf. Amory (1997): 291–307, Gillett (2000), and Heather (1991): 34–67, on the one hand; and the very different perspectives in Anton (1994), and Wolfram (1994). On the date of composition of the *Getica*, cf. Coumert (2007): 54–9; 85–6, Goffart (1988): 97–101, and Goffart (2005): 394–5; Coumert argues that it was written during 551 and 552, a timeline I am comfortable with; Goffart (2005) is more precise, suggesting it must have been written after March 551. His earlier suggestion (1988) of 554 is not compelling.

10 That the Goths converted to Arian and not Catholic Christianity during the reign of Valens, and that Ulfila (the Gothic bishop responsible for translating the Bible into Gothic) was an Arian, is not disputed. Amory (1997): 236–76, suggests that by the time Jordanes was writing, many Goths in Italy might in fact have been Catholic. There is only

Jordanes's *Getica* is clearly not a work of anti-Gothic propaganda: as we shall see, he obviously felt that the Gothic past, however barbarian, pagan, or Arian it might have been, should be portrayed in a largely positive manner.

We know little about Jordanes: in a brief passage, he tells us that his grandfather was secretary to the leader of the Alans, and that he himself was secretary to a certain Baza, "magister militum" and of Amal origin.¹¹ At the end of the *Getica*, a single clause might indicate that Jordanes was a Goth, but more likely does not: he says "nec me quis in favorem gentis praedictae, quasi ex ipsa trahenti originem, aliqua addidisse credat, quam quae legi et comperi".¹² Deciding which meaning we allow "quasi" to have here depends on whether we have already decided whether or not Jordanes was a Goth.¹³ Jordanes mentions a "conversio" he has undergone,¹⁴ but it is unclear what he means by this; there is insufficient reason to believe he was in religious orders, and in fact we know nothing further about his life at all.¹⁵

Apart from the *Getica*, Jordanes composed another history: *De summa temporum vel origine actibusque gentis Romanorum*, known to modern scholarship as the *Romana*. This work begins with Adam, and provides brief chronicle-like entries up to the birth of Christ. It then backtracks to Romulus, and gives us a fuller narrative of Roman history continuing up to the time of Theoderic, drawing on a number of Latin histories, and with very little to say about the Goths. Although largely based on secular sources, Jordanes inserts a fair amount of

certainty that the group later known as Visigoths, who moved into Roman territory and thence eventually to Spain, were Arian, and that Theoderic himself and apparently his Goths were Arian too; there seem nevertheless to have been Catholic Goths in the east in the fourth century and later (Mathisen 1997: 670–6; see n. 160 below for further discussion and references to the relevant sources and scholarship). On the religious aims of Jordanes, cf. also O'Donnell (1982).

11 *Getica*: 265–6. Jordanes's biography is discussed in most detail by Christensen (2002): 85–103; see also Coumert (2007): 52–4; Gillett (2000); Goffart (1988): 42–7; Mortensen (1991): 51–3; Reydellet (1981): 257–9.

12 "Let no one believe that I have added in favour of the afore-mentioned people anything beyond what I read and found, as if I myself trace my origins from it" (*Getica*: 316). According to Mommsen's index, "quasi" in Jordanes could mean "tamquam" ("as if") or "utpote" ("indeed", "to be sure"), but even Mommsen does not cite this passage under the latter meaning. The translations of all Latin and Germanic texts provided in the present work are my own.

13 On this point, cf. the views of Christensen (2002): 89–90; Coumert (2007): 53; Goffart (1988): 42–3; Mortensen (1991): 52; Liebeschuetz (2011a): 186, n. 3, and Liebeschuetz (2011b): 296, n. 9; Reydellet (1981): 257.

14 *Getica*: 266.

15 Christensen (2002): 94–102.

Christian history into his account; although he generally expresses a pro-Roman, imperial stance, it has plausibly been argued that Jordanes also presents a pessimistic attitude towards empire, conditioned by the many setbacks he would have witnessed in his own time.¹⁶

The *Getica* is not only more original, in that it presents us with far more material for which sources cannot be found; it is also more complicated in its structure (though the *Romana* contains chronological confusions as well). Following a brief preface, the narrative proper begins with a geographical introduction to the Gothic homeland, which also, however, contains a description of Britain,¹⁷ and lists the peoples of Scandza, the island from where the Goths set off on their migrations.¹⁸ Little is said about the Goths while they are still in Scandza; most of the narrative before the splitting of the Goths into Visigoths and Ostrogoths concerns their residence in Scythia, their final home before they come into conflict with Rome.¹⁹ The Gothic migration takes place in several stages: under their first king Berig, they move from Scandza to the mainland of Gothiscandza, and then to the land of the Ulmerugi; neither Gothiscandza nor the Ulmerugi can be identified, and seem not to exist outside Jordanes's text.²⁰ Then, under Filimer, they move to Scythia, but on the journey, a bridge they are crossing breaks, with half the Goths in Scythia, and

16 The principal known sources for the *Romana* are the Eusebius–Jerome chronicle, and the histories of Florus, Festus, Eutropius, and Orosius. Mommsen provides a brief overview of the sources in the introduction (Mommsen 1882: xxiii–xxx) and apparatus to his edition. On the sources and general outlook presented in this text, see especially Goffart (1988): 47–58; cf. also Christensen (2002): 103–12; O'Donnell (1982); and Reydellet (1981): 263–4.

17 On the function of Britain in the *Getica*, see Merrills (2005): 137–42; and Heather (1991): 66; Heather (1996): 26–7. Heather suggests that like Scandinavia, Britain as a place of origin was derived from an ethnographic *topos* according to which barbarians came from inhospitable northern islands.

18 *Getica*: 4–24.

19 Although Jordanes applies the terms Visigoth and Ostrogoth to Gothic groups in the fourth century, no contemporary sources do so, and in fact the *Getica* is rare (though not unique) for a text before the eighth century in that both terms are used; these designations almost certainly reflect a perception of Jordanes's own time, and are influenced by non-Gothic perceptions of the Goths. Ammianus, who provides the most information about the fourth-century Goths, refers not to Visigoths and Ostrogoths, but to Tervingi and Greutungi, and also “Gothorum reliquas gentes” (xxxI.iii, 8); how these might correspond to the groups mentioned by Jordanes is far from clear. On the use of Visigoth and Ostrogoth, see Coumert (2007): 66–8; and Gillett (2000): appendix; on Ammianus and possible earlier evidence of different sub-groups of Goths, see Christensen (2002): 198–229.

20 *Getica*: 25–6.

the rest left behind—and also, it would seem, left out of the course of history.²¹ After their initial arrival in Scythia, Jordanes tells us that the Goths had three homes: Scythia; Dacia, Thrace and Moesia; and finally Scythia again, this time along the Black Sea coast.²² In each of these three stages, with increasing detail, Jordanes narrates the exploits of the Goths and their interactions (sometimes as enemies, sometimes as allies) with a number of peoples famous in the ancient world: they are ancestors of the Parthians, and engage in warfare against Persians; Gothic women are Amazons; the Goths are involved in the Trojan war, allied with Philip of Macedonia, and impervious to Julius Caesar's attempt to conquer them.²³

While they are in their third abode near the Black Sea, we also learn of the Goths' conflicts with other peoples, who were, unlike the Persians, Macedonians, and the other peoples mentioned above, not prominent in the ancient Greek and Roman literary tradition: Gepids, Vandals, Herules, and Huns.²⁴ (All these peoples do, however, occur in Roman sources from the fourth century onwards.) It is only from the next period (in the mid-fourth century, though Jordanes provides no dates himself) that Jordanes's narrative can be checked against, and in the broader details conforms to, reports from other sources, many of which were contemporary to the events recorded. It was at this time, according to Jordanes, that the Goths split into two groups: the Visigoths, who moved westwards, fought and later became allies of Rome, and eventually settled in Aquitaine and Spain;²⁵ and the Ostrogoths, who remained in the east, battled with the Huns, settled along the lower Danube, and eventually established a kingdom in Italy.²⁶ Jordanes provides us an extensive narrative of Visigothic history until the time of Alaric II, who was to marry the daughter of Theoderic the Ostrogoth, thus connecting the history of the Visigoths to that of the Ostrogoths once again.²⁷ The last part of the *Getica* deals briefly with the Gothic kingdom of Italy and its defeat by the Romans under Justinian; the text concludes with an expression of hope symbolised by the marriage between a descendant of the Amals and a descendant of the Anicii.²⁸

21 *Getica*: 27.

22 *Getica*: 38–42.

23 *Getica*: 48 (Parthians); 61–4 (war against Persians); 49–50; 56–7 (Amazons); 59–60 (Trojan war); 65 (allies of Philip); 68 (unvanquished by Caesar).

24 *Getica*: 94–100 (Gepids); 111–15 (Vandals); 116–20 (Herules); 121–30 (Huns).

25 *Getica*: 131–63.

26 *Getica*: 246–95.

27 *Getica*: 164–245.

28 *Getica*: 296–314.

Over a third of the *Getica* concerns the history of the Goths before their partition, and relatively little space is given to the hundred years immediately preceding the writing of this text. That being said, very little time is taken by the account of the Goths before they arrive around the lower reaches of the Dnieper close to the Black Sea. In other words, Jordanes seems to know most about the Goths only from the time when they were, in his own account, settled not far from the boundaries of the Roman empire, and for which period he had access to contemporary, written, Greek and Latin sources. This in itself should give us pause when considering the extent to which Jordanes drew on authentic ancient Gothic tradition, whether oral or written. I shall focus in the following on the period before the fourth century, for which there was little precedent in terms of Gothic history in the Greek or Latin (and thus written) traditions on which Jordanes could base his narrative.

Jordanes's Sources: Oral or Written?

The difficulties posed by Jordanes begin with the preface, addressed to an otherwise unknown Castalius, in which we learn that the latter has persuaded Jordanes to interrupt his abbreviation of the chronicles

ut nostris verbis duodecim Senatoris volumina de origine actusque Getarum ab olim et usque nunc per generationes regesque descendentes in uno et hoc parvo libello choartem.²⁹

The source mentioned here is the now-lost Gothic history of Cassiodorus, minister to the Ostrogothic king Theoderic and his successors.³⁰ Jordanes goes on to say that he only had a chance to look at this work for three days, and that

29 "In order that I should compress into this one very small book, in our own words, the Senator's twelve books regarding the origin and deeds of the Goths from former times until now, following the order of generations and kings" (*Getica: praefatio*).

30 The figure of Cassiodorus and the purpose, date, and meaning of his *Variae* (the text of most relevance to the issues discussed here) have been hotly and inconclusively debated. The principal works of note—which provide often significantly divergent views—are Arnold (2014): 37–56 *et passim*, Bjornlie (2012), Gillett (1998), Kakridi (2005), Krautschick (1983), and Reydellet (1981): 183–253; cf. also Teillet (1984): 281–304. The reference specifically to twelve books of history might in fact be an allusion also to the division of the *Aeneid*—the primary literary source for the Roman origin narrative, which also includes a long migration—into twelve books. On Cassiodorus's historical writing, see further the discussion below at nn. 73–7.

“quamvis verba non recolo, sensus tamen et res actas credo me integre retinere”.³¹ Nevertheless, he admits that he also adds to Cassiodorus’s history, drawing on other sources and inserting his own words: “et ex nonnullis historiis Grecis ac Latinis addedi convenientia, initium finemque et plura in medio mea dictione permiscens”.³²

The extent of Jordanes’s dependence on Cassiodorus is fraught with controversy.³³ The relationship between the two histories is a matter of some importance, because Jordanes probably wrote in Constantinople, and at any rate is to be located firmly within an eastern context, at a time when Rome and the Gothic kingdom in Italy had recently been at war. Cassiodorus, on the other hand, wrote his history in the Gothic kingdom of Italy, while this kingdom was still thriving, and it would hardly be surprising for him to write a narrative presenting the Goths and their past in a wholly positive light. Moreover, given their respective situations, it has been suggested that Cassiodorus was more likely than Jordanes to have had access to genuine Gothic oral tradition, at least regarding the history of the Amal dynasty to which Theoderic of Italy belonged. For this reason especially, those scholars who believe that the *Getica* reflects

31 “Although I do not recollect the words, I believe that I do retain correctly the ideas and the events” (*Getica: praefatio*).

32 “And from several Greek and Latin histories I added appropriate material, including a beginning, end, and much in the middle in my own words” (*ibid.*).

33 The older views regarding the relationship between Cassiodorus and Jordanes are summarised (with varying degrees of agreement) by Goffart (1988): 23–42; 58–62, Coumert (2007): 75–8; 125–38, and Merrills (2005): 101–14. A very thorough critique is given by Christensen (2002): 54–83; 115–23. Goffart, Christensen, and Coumert see Jordanes as an independent author (though Christensen seems to support greater dependence on Cassiodorus than does Goffart); so does Reydellet, who points out a number of key differences in tone and function (Reydellet 1981: 261–7). A contrary view is presented by (for example) Anton (1994), Krautschick (1983): 21–40 (based on Momigliano 1966), and Weißensteiner (1994), the last of whom claims, without evidence, that on stylistic grounds Jordanes can be seen to be Cassiodorus (cf. Coumert 2007: 126–8, for a rebuttal of this view). Liebeschuetz (2011a) also seems to believe this is true of very large portions of the *Getica*, including much of the material discussed in the present work. Many scholars agree that Jordanes should be understood as a historian in his own right, but nevertheless argue for more or less substantial dependence on Cassiodorus, while differing on the extent of such a dependence: Croke (1987); Croke (2003): 363–67; Heather (1991): 50–2; Merrills (2005): 101–14 and *passim*; Mortensen (1991): 49–50; O’Donnell (1982). Bradley (1993) sensibly suggests that the matter cannot be resolved, but accepts Jordanes’s agency in his work.

authentic Gothic tradition tend also to believe that it is largely Cassiodorus's history.³⁴

Unless we are to assume that Jordanes simply copied Cassiodorus without much thought regarding the content of what he wrote, we cannot explain the existence and attitudes of Jordanes's text by appeal to Cassiodorus's political situation. The discussion below is based on what I think is the only reasonable assumption: that Jordanes used a variety of sources to compile his narrative, of which Cassiodorus's history was one, albeit possibly the most important one. I believe further that it is impossible to determine how much of Jordanes's text derives from Cassiodorus, and speculation on this matter is not only futile, but also seems to detract from an understanding of what Jordanes's narrative actually says.³⁵ A number of scholars have shown that Jordanes does indeed draw on several Greek and Latin works, some of which Cassiodorus appears not to have known (Cassiodorus does not seem to have had much Greek).³⁶ There is no reason to doubt that he could also indeed have inserted material in his own words, drawing on sources unknown to us, whether oral or written.³⁷

There are, however, many aspects of the early part of the narrative (before the Goths reach the boundaries of Rome) for which no extant source can be identified. The introduction, although clearly inspired by Orosius,³⁸ and drawing on a number of ancient writers, nevertheless also departs from all identifiable sources in its description of northern European geography.³⁹ "Scandza",

34 It is worth noting, though, that Jordanes's narrative is by no means solely concerned with the Amals, and if he were only interested—as Cassiodorus, given his political circumstances, might well have been—in glorifying Amals, the logic behind the inclusion of such an extensive history of the Visigoths in Aquitaine and Spain is not entirely clear; if it were just a matter of further glorifying the Amals by showing how the Spanish kingdom also came under their authority, one would think that such a lengthy narrative regarding the Visigoths would not have been necessary.

35 For an attempt to judge the dependence of the *Getica* on Cassiodorus's lost history by comparing it with the latter's *Chronicon*, see Croke (1987); cf. Bradley (1993).

36 The most recent and comprehensive analysis of Jordanes's sources is that of Christensen (2002), which summarises and largely supersedes the older source-criticism; see also Coumert (2007): 62–78. Mommsen (1882): xxx–xliv, lists 24 written sources used by Jordanes, apart from Cassiodorus and the otherwise unknown Ablabius, on whom cf. Coumert (2007): 64–70, and Gillett (2000); see also the discussion below at n. 82. The most important known works are Ammianus, Justin's epitome of Pompeius Trogus, and Orosius (Latin); and Cassius Dio, Dio Chrysostom, and Priscus (Greek).

37 A similar conclusion is reached by Liebeschuetz (2011a): 187–8; Liebeschuetz is, however, to my mind overly confident about being able to identify Cassiodorus in the *Getica*.

38 Cf. Orosius: I.ii,1.

39 Christensen (2002): 252–300; Merrills (2005): 115–67.

the original home of the Goths, appears to be to some extent an original construction of Jordanes, although based on a number of elements borrowed from earlier writers. Jordanes names Ptolemy and Pomponius Mela as his sources, but gives us more detail about “Scandza” than is present in any extant earlier work.⁴⁰ His description of its population also has no known sources: he tells us that it is inhabited by dozens of different peoples, some of whom, like the Dani and the Heruli, are known from elsewhere (though not necessarily as living in “Scandza”), although most are otherwise unrecorded. He mentions also the Ranii, whose king Roduulf, despising his own kingdom, had recently sought refuge with Theoderic.⁴¹

Since Jordanes differs from his named written sources in many ways, it has been suggested that the description of “Scandza” is based on information derived from Roduulf via Cassiodorus; nothing more is known of this character, however, so it seems unwise to place much burden on him as a potential source.⁴² At any rate, as far as geography is concerned, Jordanes does not claim to have explicitly Gothic sources (whether oral or written) for his description of the island whence the Goths came, even if we cannot clearly identify any other sources for much of this portion of the *Getica*.

In his description of Scythia and of deeds of the Goths while they lived in Scythia and in Moesia, Thrace, and Dacia, Jordanes clearly uses material which in earlier sources concerns other peoples, primarily Scythians and Getae, simply transferring narratives of the latter to the Goths.⁴³ In this, he follows—but

40 Ptolemy's description of “Σκανδία” (“Skandia”) is followed quite extensively by Jordanes, who, however, has 27 peoples in his “Scandza”, as opposed to Ptolemy's seven (see Stückelberger and Graßhoff, eds and trans. 2006: II.xi,33–5; VIII.vi,4).

41 *Getica*: 24.

42 Christensen (2002): 270–1; 293. See also Goffart (1988): 94–5, who compares Jordanes's story of Roduulf with Procopius's tale of the wandering Herules, who came into contact with the Romans under their king Rodolphus (Dewing, ed. and trans. 1914–28: VI.xiv–xv). That Jordanes may have drawn on this story is certainly possible. However, there is no warrant for believing that the Herule king in Procopius and the Roduulf at Theoderic's court in the *Getica* were the same person (cf. Merrills 2005: 128–30; 152, who, while also chary of placing too much value on Roduulf as a source, accepts that the king mentioned in the *Getica* was indeed at Theoderic's court, and was identical to the Herule king of Procopius).

43 Christensen (2002): 235–47. On third- and fourth-century confusions of Scythians, Getae, and Goths, see nn. 2–3 above. Jordanes's sources here are Justin (Seel, ed. 1972: I.i,6; II.iii,8–14 [the Scythian king Thanausis]; II.iii,6; XL.I.i,1–2 [Scythians and Parthians]; II.i,2–4; iv,1–33 [Scythians and Amazons]), Orosius (I.xiv–xvi [Scythians and Amazons; Scythians and Egyptians]), and Dycitis Cretensis (or his Greek source) (Eisenhut, ed. 1973: II,1 [Telephus of Moesia]). Dicineus, who, in Jordanes's account, brought civilisation to the

significantly expands on—the confusion in earlier sources. Jordanes's descriptions of the Goths in Scythia seem to be drawn directly from extant Greek or Latin works, but modern historians have been unable to determine the historical relationship between the Goths and the Scythians.

All the narratives in the *Getica* that associate the Goths with some of the better-known peoples of antiquity (Trojans, Greeks, Macedonians, Persians, Parthians, Romans) depend on earlier works that treat of the Scythians and the Getae.⁴⁴ The impression created by Jordanes's narrative is of an indomitable people, perhaps barbarian, but cultured enough to be “almost like the Greeks,”⁴⁵ and of a greatness to make them seem even more remarkable than the other great nations of antiquity known in Jordanes's time.⁴⁶ The Goths, we are supposed to perceive, clearly had a past worthy of celebration—even if this past was, as some educated readers would probably discern, lifted from writings on Scythians and Getae.⁴⁷

Jordanes does, however, also explicitly refer to oral sources on a number of occasions. Just after having told us that the Goths have arrived at the shore of the Black Sea, he writes that their journey “in priscis eorum carminibus pene storicu ritu in commune recolitur: quod et Ablavius descriptor Gothorum gentis egregius verissima adtestatur historia.”⁴⁸ We are told that some of the “maiores” also agree with Jordanes's narrative of this journey (“in quam sententiam et nonnulli consensere maiorum”),⁴⁹ though Jordanes cannot understand why

Goths under their king Buruista, and Zalmoxes, another learned man mentioned by Jordanes, are derived from Strabo's account of Decaeneus and Zamolxis, who bring wisdom to the Getae under their king Boerebistas (Jones, ed. and trans. 1917–33: VII.iii,5; VII.iii,11).

44 Christensen (2002): 235–49.

45 “et pene omnibus barbaris Gothi sapientiores semper extiterunt Grecisque pene consimiles” (*Getica*: 40: “and they had always been far wiser, I may say, than all barbarians, and were almost like the Greeks”).

46 Teillet (1984): 312–13.

47 Orosius, similarly confusing Goths and Getae, also portrayed the Goths as formidable enemies of Alexander and Caesar (I.xvi,2); this is picked up almost verbatim by Isidore (see below).

48 “[Their journey] is generally recollected in their ancient songs in almost historical fashion; and Ablavius, the excellent portrayer of the people of the Goths attests to it in his most trustworthy history” (*Getica*: 28).

49 *Getica*: 29. It is not entirely certain who these “maiores” are, but the reference, in context, is almost certainly to written sources, beginning with Josephus, who is mentioned as a source immediately after this clause. On three other occasions the term refers explicitly to written Greek works (*Getica*: 59; 148; 316; on these passages, see Gillett 2000: 484, n. 9; Coumert 2007: 81–2). At *Getica*: 116, we are told that Ermanaric is compared to Alexander by the “maiores”, and at *Getica*: 246, Jordanes says that he is following the “maiores” in

Josephus does not tell about the origins of the Goths, confusing them, according to Jordanes, with the Scythians.⁵⁰ It is, however, far from clear what exactly Jordanes is supposed to have drawn from the songs: the whole narrative of migration, or just the story of Filimer taking the Goths through Scythia to the Black Sea? It is also unclear how much he draws from Ablabius, how much from the “*prisca carmina*”, and how much from the “*maiores*”—or are we to understand that all sources agree completely?

A further reference to songs is made when Jordanes tells us that the Goths wished to be first among the neighbouring peoples in archery (“*Quorum studium fuit primum inter alias gentes vicinas arcum intendere nervis*”); this statement is derived from a passage in Lucan that Jordanes explicitly refers to, calling Lucan “more a historian than a poet” (“*Lucano plus storico quam poeta testante: ‘Armeniosque arcus Geticis intendite nervis’*”), but we are also told that the exploits of many who were highly regarded by the Goths (“*Eterparmara, Hanale, Fridigerni, Vidigoiae et aliorum, quorum in hac gente magna opinio est*”) were celebrated in song: “*cantu maiorum facta modulationibus citharisque caneant*”.⁵¹ However, at no point when we are actually given narratives about any of these figures is reference made to oral sources of any sort. Both references to songs, therefore, seem to be appeals to the authority of some form of oral tradition, but are not supported by any narratives demonstrably drawn from such a tradition.

After bringing the Goths to Scythia, Jordanes provides a geographical digression on this region, and then, before the narrative resumes, there is a mysterious interjection that refers both to written record and some kind of oral source, but seems to make little sense:

nec eorum fabulas alicubi repperimus scriptas, qui eos dicunt in Brittania vel in unaqualibet insularum in servitute redactos et in unius caballi pretio a quodam ereptos. aut certe si quis eos aliter dixerit in nostro urbe,

telling us about the division of the Goths; the nature and identity of the “*maiores*” is unclear in both cases. The reference is clearly intended as an appeal to authority, which is probably here supposed to be understood as written, but no fourth- or fifth-century sources speak of a division between Visi- and Ostrogoths, and no other source compares Ermanaric and Alexander. The only clear instance of “*maiores*” indicating oral tradition is at *Getica*: 43.

50 *Getica*: 28–9. Amory believes that Jordanes accepts the narratives in the “*carmina*”, “but only through the medium of the historian Ablabius” (Amory 1997: 296, n. 97). Note, though, that Jordanes mentions the songs first, and says that the same material is *also* contained in Ablabius; note also that the verb “*recolo*” is given in the present tense.

51 “They sang in the song of the ancients composed with melodies and zithers” (*Getica*: 43).

quam quod nos diximus, fuisse exortos, nobis aliquid obstrepebit: nos enim potius lectioni credimus quam fabulis anilibus consentimus.⁵²

What does all this mean? Walter Goffart believes that there may have been suggestions that the Ostrogoths should be given Britain as a means of ridding Rome of an unnecessary nuisance, and cites Procopius as providing a narrative of troublesome barbarians (in this case Herules) obligingly leaving Rome for a northern island.⁵³ While it is impossible to determine whether this bit of contemporary politics gave rise in Constantinople to a story of Gothic origins or previous slavery in Britain, Goffart's view that this interjection of Jordanes is intended to counter any arguments that would have the Goths being expelled from the Roman regions is certainly plausible.⁵⁴

If we accept this reading, it would seem that this paragraph was written by Jordanes in order to assert the Goths' irrevocable involvement in the Roman world, making the reference both to the reading and the old wives' tales meaningless. Nevertheless, it is clear that here, as elsewhere, Jordanes is making an appeal to the authority of written sources—even though there is actually no written tradition to back up his narrative of Gothic origins in Scandza. And while he is consistent in how he values writing, at this point he seems to contrast it with oral material that is not to be trusted. For this reason, a number of scholars have asserted that from this passage Jordanes can be seen to value written over oral sources.⁵⁵ Perhaps it is important, though, that the oral narrative referred to in this particular case is something possibly circulating in Constantinople (the "urbs" referred to), and probably to be understood as having a different value from that of the ancient songs mentioned earlier—Jordanes not only does not denigrate those songs, but also appears to refer to them as reliable authorities.

Later in the narrative, when describing how the Goths were counselled by Dicineus, Jordanes tells us that the Goths acquire laws, and a knowledge of physics, astronomy, and philosophy.⁵⁶ According to him, the laws are preserved

52 "Nor do we find written anywhere the tales of those who say that they [the Goths] were led into slavery in Britain or in any other one of the islands, and were redeemed by a certain man for the price of one horse. Certainly, if anyone in our city were to say that their origin was different from what we have reported, he will take issue with us; we would rather believe our reading than agree with old wives' tales" (*Getica*: 38).

53 Goffart (1988): 94–6; for the Procopius passages, see Dewing (ed. and trans. 1914–28): vi. xv, 1–4.

54 Cf. Heather (1991): 66; Heather (1996): 26–7.

55 Amory (1997): 296; Croke (1987): 123–4; Gillett (2000): 485, n. 12; Goffart (1988): 89.

56 *Getica*: 69–71.

in writing in his own time; but no written laws are now extant that are in any manner explicitly Gothic and could be derived from any ancient and specifically Gothic laws.⁵⁷ Dicineus also gave Gothic priests the designation of “pilleati”, and named the rest of the Goths “capillati, quod nomen Gothi pro magno suscipientes adhuc odie suis cantionibus reminiscunt”.⁵⁸ Cassiodorus knows of a group of “capillati” as a part of the army in Italy, but he says nothing of their songs;⁵⁹ if Jordanes refers to the “capillati” that may have existed in his own lifetime, it is strange that he says the Goths *remember* this name in their songs, but are not called by it in the present.⁶⁰ We have, once more, a reference to some kind of oral tradition that need not mean anything at all, and certainly does not relate clearly to the historically attested contemporary presence of a particular group of people the oral tradition is supposed to commemorate.⁶¹

The final reference to what might be oral source material comes just before Jordanes gives us the genealogy of the Amal kings: “Horum ergo heroum, ut ipsi suis in fabulis referunt, primus fuit Gapt, qui genuit Hulmul”.⁶² We should note that Jordanes does not state explicitly that the whole genealogy is based on or recorded in the “fabulae”: this passage could be taken to apply just to Gapt. There is no known written source for the whole genealogy as presented in the *Getica*, but the form itself is clearly derived from written models, most prominently the Bible. Cassiodorus mentions nine of the kings in Jordanes’s genealogy, and his lost history is thought to be the source for Jordanes, but there is, of course, no proof of this, beyond the fact that he says that Athalaric

57 *Getica*: 69. All that is extant from this period that might pass for ‘Gothic’ law is the *Edictum Theodorici* (Bluhme, ed. 1875–89), a law code published by Theoderic; the most comprehensive study is that of Lafferty (2013). This text is, however, derived completely from Roman law, and even though it is in many respects, as Lafferty shows, a dilution of Roman legal tradition, there is little in its character that one could call specifically Gothic. It seems equally difficult to isolate any specifically Gothic elements in the fifth-century Codex Euricianus, the law code of the Visigothic king Euric (Collins 2004: 224–31; Harries 2001).

58 “Which name the Goths received as being great, and remember it until today in their songs” (*Getica*: 71–2).

59 *Var.*: IV.XI.

60 Note also that Pliny refers to an Italian population called “capillati” long before any Goths were in Italy (Mayhoff, ed. 1892–1909): III.V.47.

61 Christensen (2002): 245–6. On hairstyles and their significance in Ostrogothic Italy, see further Amory (1997): 344–6; Arnold (2013).

62 “The first of their heroes, as they themselves say in their fables, was Gapt, who fathered Hulmul” (*Getica*: 79).

was the seventeenth in the line of Gothic kings, and in Jordanes's genealogy too he is in the seventeenth generation of Amal kings.⁶³

In terms of explicit references to oral sources, therefore, Jordanes gives us very little, and what we find in the *Getica* in this regard is of dubious value. References to oral material are paired with written sources for the same information; ridiculed; not directly related to any clearly oral-derived narrative in Jordanes's text; or of unclear significance because they refer to a term used in the recent past, but the oral material is said to remember the term.⁶⁴ However, even if Jordanes does not often explicitly mention oral sources, and his references are of doubtful value and significance, we are still left with many elements of the text for which there are no known written antecedents: these include the names of peoples inhabiting Scandza, the narrative of migration itself, the broken bridge, the names of the earliest Gothic kings, Berig, Gadarig and Filimer; from the later section of his narrative, there are also the names of the peoples ruled by the fourth-century Gothic king Ermanaric, and the "haliurunnae", some kind of witches from whom the Huns descended.⁶⁵ In addition to these individual elements, there is also the problem of "legends

63 The Cassiodorus passages are *Var.*: XI.I.19, and *Var.*: IX.XXV.4. Arne Søby Christensen has demonstrated that Jordanes's genealogy does not accord with his own narrative: there are Gothic rulers who are not in the Amal genealogy, and Amals who are not Gothic rulers. In his account of the kings of the late fourth century, Jordanes also differs from Ammianus, who was a contemporary (Christensen 2002: 124–55). The significance of the number seventeen is derived from the number of mythical kings of Alba Longa from Aeneas to Romulus (Wolfram 1971: 17).

64 *Getica*: 28; 38; 43 and 79; 72.

65 *Getica*: 116–20; 121. Christensen points out that a Berig was known to Cassius Dio as a Celtic king in the first century, and to Priscus as a (possibly Hunnic) member of Attila's court. Either text might be a source for Jordanes's use of the name, though he places Berig in a very different context (Christensen 2002: 302–4). Heather believes that there was a genuine Gothic narrative about Berig, though not about Scandinavia (Heather 1996: 26–7). Gadarig and Filimer are otherwise unknown. On the "haliurunnae", see Christensen (2002): 241–2; and cf. Heather (1991): 5–6, Pohl (2002), and Wolfram (1994): 23–4; 31. Note also that while the word itself might be Germanic (a cognate occurs in *Beowulf*: 164; cf. Fulk, Bjork, and Niles 2008: 126, for commentary), the story draws on a biblical model; Goffart presents a plausible scenario of how this might have come to pass (Goffart 1995: 29). On the names of Ermanaric's peoples, see Christensen (2002): 158–96; the same author's work is invaluable for demonstrating the impossibility of arguing on grounds of Germanic philology that the names in Jordanes indicate that he used authentically Gothic, ancient oral tradition.

and unverifiable barbarian exploits".⁶⁶ The presence of names or stories for which no sources can be traced is an interpretative problem not just for the earlier part of the history of the Goths, but also for the narratives of the fourth and fifth centuries, in which, although much material can be traced to identifiable sources, there are nevertheless stories apparently original to Jordanes. The unverifiable nature of a number of Jordanes's tales suggests intrusions of oral material in the narrative.⁶⁷

Arne Søbby Christensen argues that the migration legend was a creation of Cassiodorus, and was not based on any living oral tradition; he supports this by pointing out inconsistencies in Jordanes, and the fact that Isidore knows nothing of these narratives.⁶⁸ This is fair enough, but if we accept Christensen's suggestion, we are left with assuming that the narratives were original creations of Cassiodorus, with no sources. The difficulty is that even if Jordanes's own explicit references to oral sources are not very credible, and do not help us in any way to ascertain what oral material he might or might not have used (and as we shall see, turning to Cassiodorus's words does not make things easier), this fact does not obliterate the unexplained, un-sourced narratives. Given that all living non-literate cultures that have been studied do preserve oral material concerning their past, however widely different in form and content, it hardly seems to be stretching the imagination to believe that the Goths could have had a historical oral tradition.⁶⁹ What is less clear is whether and in what

66 Goffart (1988): 64. Goffart provides a "conservative list" (Goffart 1988: 64, n. 218); some of the narratives of possibly legendary nature, and more importantly, lacking known written sources, include the migration story; the broken bridge (*Getica*: 27); the foundation of Marcianople (*Getica*: 93); the origins of the Huns (*Getica*: 121–4); the death of Ermanaric (*Getica*: 129–30) (I exclude material relating to Alaric and later events and persons).

67 Coumert is correct that explicit references to oral sources tend to coincide with explicit reference to written sources; she suggests that this is because Jordanes (and Cassiodorus) felt that both were required to authenticate accounts of barbarian history, and that the reference to oral material might derive from a knowledge of Tacitus's famous statement that for the inhabitants of Germania, ancient songs ("carmina antiqua") are "unum apud illos memoriae et annalium genus" ("the sole form of memory and annals among them"): Coumert (2007): 72; 82–3; Ogilvie and Winterbottom (eds 1975): 11,2. Knowledge of the Tacitus passage might very well be the reason why Jordanes includes the reference to "prisca carmina" that he calls almost historical (*Getica*: 28). Nevertheless, while his wording might be an allusion to Tacitus, this still does not explain parts of the *Getica* for which no plausible sources can be suggested; nor does it mean that there were no oral sources accessible to either Cassiodorus or Jordanes.

68 Christensen (2002): 304–17.

69 For an overview of different kinds of oral transmission of historical information in living traditions, see Vansina (1985); for an introduction to orally composed and transmitted

form such a tradition survived in Jordanes's own time. By this point, we should recall, the Ostrogoths had been ruling Italy for three generations, and had been federates and allies of Rome, and members of the Roman army, for over a century; they had also clearly adopted the written word for purposes of government and religion, and they also patronised written cultural production.⁷⁰

Certainly, any surviving oral material would have been affected by centuries of contact with the literate culture of Rome, and over half a century, by the time the *Getica* was written, of Gothic rule in Italy. Any postulated living oral tradition would therefore have been a reflection more of current views of the past than of unchanged ancient material.⁷¹ We should also be wary of viewing possible oral sources as necessarily belonging to some kind of formalised oral tradition; they could derive from "court gossip, learned deductions or the stories brought back by travellers and soldiers",⁷² and would have borne the stamp of substantial Roman (whether Latin or Greek) influence.

Of course, Jordanes may have had no access to any oral material, and the unexplained source for narratives we cannot connect with any other written material might be Cassiodorus's lost history. For this reason, we need to turn briefly to Cassiodorus and his remarks about Gothic history, to try and understand where he might have got his information. Cassiodorus wrote two historical works, of which one, his *Chronica*, survives. What this conveys is in many respects quite different from what we learn in the *Getica*, though not necessarily conflicting.⁷³ Regarding the longer, lost *Gothic History*, we receive all the information we have from a speech Cassiodorus wrote for Athalaric to deliver to the senate in 533 on the occasion of Cassiodorus's appointment as *praefectus praetorio*. The relevant passage is as follows:

[4] Tetendit se etiam in antiquam prosapiem nostram, lectione discens quod vix maiorum notitia cana retinebat. iste reges Gothorum longa oblivione celatos latibulo vetustatis eduxit. iste Hamalos cum generis sui claritate restituit, evidenter ostendens in septimam decimam progeniem

Turkic epic which is, however, also influenced by written material, see Reichl (1992); and see also Reichl (2000) for illuminating comparisons of living Turkic and medieval European traditions.

70 See, for a broad view of forms of government and religion, Amory (1997, *passim*); specifically on literacy and cultural production, see Everett (2003): 23–33, and Hen (2007): 27–58.

71 Cf. Amory (1997): 295–8, and Heather (1991): 5–6; 61–6.

72 Amory (1997): 295.

73 For differing analyses of this text, see Bradley (1993); Croke (1987); and Christensen (2002): 57–67.

stirpem nos habere regalem. [5] Originem Gothicam historiam fecit esse Romanam, colligens quasi in unam coronam germen floridum quod per librorum campos passim fuerat ante dispersum. [6] Perpendite, quantum vos in nostra laude dilexerit, qui vestri principis nationem docuit ab antiquitate mirabilem, ut, sicut fuistis a maioribus vestris semper nobiles aestimati, ita vobis antiqua regum progenies inperaret.⁷⁴

What is particularly striking about this passage, with regard to the problem of Gothic oral tradition, is that Cassiodorus is obviously at pains to discount it.⁷⁵ He learnt about the Goths by *reading* (“lectione”), and what he learnt was material that the elders hardly remembered (“quod vix maiorum notitia cana retinebat”). By reading too, it is implied, and by writing, he restored the Gothic kings to fame, rescuing them from oblivion. He did so by collecting the flowers scattered all over the fields of *books* (“per librorum campos passim fuerat ante dispersum”). By doing so, “originem Gothicam historiam fecit esse Romanam”—a controversial phrase that is easy to translate literally, but not necessarily equally easy genuinely to understand the significance of. What is obvious from this phrase, though, is that Cassiodorus was claiming to have made Gothic history Roman in some sense.⁷⁶ In other words, rather than setting up Gothic and Roman as necessary opposites, in his history he has reconciled them.⁷⁷ This point is, I think, crucial for the understanding of the rest of the passage, with its references to written works and dismissal of the memory of elders.

Goffart has suggested that “Cassiodorus’s Ravenna did not prize an oral ‘heroic memory’ as a fountain of Gothic history” and that “if Cassiodorus did not spurn the oral or traditional information that may have been available to

74 “He [scil. Cassiodorus] even turned his attention to our ancient family, learning by reading what the hoary knowledge of the elders scarcely retains. He led out from the hiding-place of antiquity the kings of the Goths, who had been concealed by long oblivion. He restored the Amals and their people to fame, showing clearly that we have a royal family to the seventeenth generation. He made Gothic origins be Roman history, collecting as though in one garland the flower-buds which had earlier been dispersed everywhere in the fields of books. Consider how he loves you in our praise, he who has shown that the ‘natio’ of your ruler was remarkable from ancient times, so that just as you have always been considered noble because of your elders, thus an ancient line of kings commands you” (*Var.* IX.XXV, 4–6).

75 Coumert (2007): 80–1, claims, however, that Cassiodorus does not oppose oral and written sources, but sees them as confirming each other and thus complementary.

76 Key readings of the whole passage, with much attention to this phrase, are provided by Christensen (2002): 124–34; Croke (2003): 361–3; and Goffart (1988): 35–9.

77 Cf. Goffart (1988): 36.

him, he also did not set a high value on its contribution".⁷⁸ The term 'heroic memory' is misleading here, and best discarded; but we might agree, based on Cassiodorus's text, that he did not set a very high value on oral tradition. We must also, however, be wary of taking at face value what Cassiodorus says, and be mindful of the context. While there were many kinds of Roman histories, they were all *written*.⁷⁹ Rome was not only a literate society in that power and administration depended on literacy; it was also a literate society in that the sources of cultural authority were written.⁸⁰ In this respect, Rome differed fundamentally from all the other European cultures with which it came into contact in late antiquity, for even if these might have adopted administrative literacy fairly quickly, they certainly had not adopted primarily written modes of preserving their cultural traditions by the mid-sixth century.⁸¹

In order to make his history appear authoritative to the senate, Cassiodorus would have had to speak of a reliance on texts; his dismissal of the memory of elders and his statement that from books he found material that was otherwise forgotten need not be understood as more than a rhetorical flourish for the purpose of satisfying his—Roman, literate—audience that Goths and their history were 'Roman' enough to be worthy rulers. Cassiodorus might well have produced Gothic history by claiming as Gothic narratives that were originally about other peoples, but it seems unlikely that he could have found in any books the material in Jordanes's text that the known sources of the *Getica* do not contain; it is unlikely that Cassiodorus had more informative, written material to draw on, *all* of which is now lost to us. It appears reasonable to

78 Goffart (1988): 38; 39.

79 See the last section of Chapter 1 for brief descriptions of some of the more important Latin texts of different genres that could certainly count as 'Roman history', including serial biographies, breviaries, *Zeitgeschichte*, and an origin narrative. Goffart's view (Goffart 1988: 37–8) that the serial biography was the model of Roman history meant by Cassiodorus therefore seems unduly restrictive, and ignores the potential influence of other established forms of Roman history.

80 This is not to suggest that there was no Latin orality in Roman culture; there must have been. But 'tradition' in the Roman sense would have meant written tradition; authoritative Roman history would have been understood only as written. On the importance for the Roman elite of absorbing the written cultural inheritance of Rome, see Everett (2003): 19–35; Everett (2009): 364–5; Heather (1994): 183–6; Jones (1964): 1001–4; 1007–12; 1021–4; Wickham (2009): 29–31. Note, however, that this becomes less important during the course of the sixth century, with the written heritage of the Church largely replacing the classical tradition (Riché 1995: 38–47; 76–85). This was, however, equally a written rather than oral tradition.

81 Heather (1994).

assume, therefore, that those portions of Jordanes's narrative—whether short 'legendary' narratives, names, or geographical descriptions—which are contained in no known written source could well have been drawn from some kind of oral reports. These might have been known to Jordanes himself, or might have been collected and written down by Cassiodorus; or they might, in some cases, derive from the otherwise unknown work of Ablabius.⁸² In the latter case, of course, if we accept Andrew Gillett's third-century date, none of the origin narratives can have been drawn (exclusively) from any material extant in oral form in the sixth century.

I must stress, though, that if there were sixth-century oral sources, such material need not have been specifically 'Gothic' (that is, in the Gothic language, and/or transmitted as a part of some sort of Gothic oral tradition); that even Gothic oral material is unlikely to have been historically accurate by modern standards; that any putative Gothic oral tradition would certainly have undergone many changes by the time it reached Cassiodorus or Jordanes, and cannot be thought to reflect genuinely ancient material going back to the time of a migration; and that within the milieu of both Jordanes and Cassiodorus, it was writing that was considered the prime form of authoritative record.

However, Cassiodorus's statements about his history certainly seem to show that he made an effort at reconciling the past of the Goths—whether his sources were Gothic or not—with the form which Romans expected history to take, and he appears to have done this as a means of cultural reconciliation of some sort. Thus this project might quite possibly have included some amount of transfer of oral material into writing, which was a tacit acknowledgement of the importance of this material, and simultaneously an assertion of the superior authority of the written word. Jordanes certainly seemed to be attempting some kind of reconciliation too, given his often highly complimentary depiction of the Gothic past.

We cannot know the extent to which possibly barbarian material was available directly to Jordanes, or reached him through Cassiodorus, but it seems to be that Jordanes was himself aiming to acknowledge a past not contained in

82 We should note that not all the otherwise un-sourced material is attributed to Ablabius, there is no reason to believe that all early unsourced material derives from him, if indeed such a writer did exist. If Gillett's placement of him in the mid-third century is accepted (Gillett 2000), then anything regarding events of a later date with no known written source may derive directly from oral material. Note, however, that Gillett's arguments in support of a third-century date for Ablabius, while certainly plausible, are by no means conclusive. For an alternative view of Ablabius, see Liebeschuetz (2011a): 189–95, 197; Liebeschuetz does not cite Gillett's paper.

authoritative Roman (whether Latin or Greek) sources, while simultaneously making the history of the Goths 'Roman' both by writing it, and by conflating it with written material on probably unrelated peoples, but available in Roman histories. In other words, the *Getica* appears to me to be a witness to a process by which Gothic history was made Roman in a very real sense: not by obliterating or denigrating the Gothic past (this would be more a denial of Gothic history), but by integrating it both with the Roman past, to the extent that this was possible, and—more importantly—with the present Roman form of commemorating the past and preserving cultural knowledge, thus making the *Getica* akin to other parts of the Roman cultural inheritance. That the *Getica* attempts such a form of cultural rapprochement seems all the more evident when one considers its attitude to Gothic religion.

Paganism and Arianism in the *Getica*

Jordanes says little about Gothic paganism. We are told that the Goths worship Mars with human sacrifices; Mars is said to be falsely called the god of war but was actually a Goth. Jordanes calls this a very harsh rite ("asperrima cultura").⁸³ Immediately following this, we are told that "eratque illis religionis preter ceteros insinuatus affectus, cum parenti devotio numinis videretur inpendi".⁸⁴ Although we learn later that Goths continued to deify their leaders, Jordanes suggests that in their third abode they adopted more humane practices: "Tertia vero sede super mare Ponticum iam humaniores et, ut superius diximus, prudentiores effecti".⁸⁵ The only other information on Gothic religion given is that while they still resided in Scythia, one of their kings, Thanausis, was worshipped as a god after his death ("hunc ergo Thanausim regem Gothorum mortuum inter numina sui populi coluerunt");⁸⁶ and just before we are presented with the Amal genealogy, we are told that because of their victory in battle (against the Romans), the Goths regarded their leaders as demi-gods: "magnaue potiti

83 *Getica*: 41.

84 "They were imbued with deeper feeling for religion than others, since they seemed to worship their ancestor as a divinity" (*Getica*: 41).

85 "But in their third abode at the Black Sea, they had been made more humane and, as I said above, wiser" (*Getica*: 42). The cross-reference is to *Getica*: 40, where we were told that the Goths were almost as wise as the Greeks.

86 *Getica*: 48; see n. 43 for Jordanes's source for Thanausis.

per loca victoria iam procures suos, quorum quasi fortuna vincebant, non puros homines, sed semideos id est Ansis vocaverunt".⁸⁷

That the Goths consider their leaders to be divine is not condemned in any manner, though we should note that Dorpaneus, their leader in this battle, figures nowhere in the Amal genealogy.⁸⁸ Of course, the raising of a leader in war to quasi-divine status was hardly unusual in Roman history; and like the Amals, the current Roman rulers were not actually descended from the first emperors to achieve divine status.⁸⁹ Describing Goths as having earlier worshipped their rulers need have nothing to do with any genuine Gothic tradition, nor need it be viewed in a solely negative light: it might simply be a further means of assimilating (pre-Christian) Gothic history to (pre-Christian) Roman practice. Furthermore, the euhemeristic interpretation of Gothic paganism serves as an apologia for the Goths: they worship humans as gods because they are deceived, not because of innate wickedness.⁹⁰ Since the leaders they deify are great warriors—to the extent that ancient poets call one of them a god of war—it seems that even this un-Christian practice implicitly praises the Goths' valour in war. Once the Goths have abandoned the practice of human sacrifice, their paganism appears to be easily excused by the fact that it stems from military prowess and is directed towards great warriors. These are the only real indications we are given in the *Getica* of Gothic paganism. Although it seems unlikely that anything of what we are told regarding the ancient Gothic rites is accurate, it is certainly reported without explicit condemnation or embarrassment, and appears not to detract from the generally positive image of the Goths as superior to other outstanding warriors.

By Jordanes's time, the Goths were Christian, albeit largely Arian. Of their religion in Jordanes's own time we hear nothing at all. This is significant not just because of their Arianism, but also because Jordanes tells us nothing about Theoderic the Great's persecution of Pope John, Symmachus, and Boethius (this is discussed below in Chapter 7); the silence can only stem from his desire not to portray the Gothic regime in a bad light. The initial conversion is treated very briefly: we are told that the Visigoths, in their fear of the Huns, promised

87 "And having achieved a great victory over there, they called their leaders—and it was as if they had conquered by the good fortune of these leaders—not only men, but demi-gods, that is Ansis" (*Getica*: 78).

88 *Getica*: 77. Dorpaneus is derived from Diurpaneus, king of the Dacians (Orosius: VII.x,4); see Christensen (2002): 126–7.

89 See also *Getica*: 143, where we are told that Athanaric thought Theodosius was a god on earth.

90 On euhemerism as used by Christian historians before Jordanes, see the discussion and references given in Chapter 1 at n. 81.

Valens that they would submit to his laws and commands and become Christian if he would give them part of Thrace or Moesia, and send them teachers who knew their own language.⁹¹ Valens grants them the land, and also sends them Christian teachers:

et quia tunc Valens imperator Arrianorum perfidia saucius nostrarum partium omnes ecclesias obturasset, suae parti fautores ad illos dirigit praedicatores, qui venientes rudibus et ignaris ilico perfidiae suae virus infundunt. Sic quoque Vesegothae a Valente imperatore Arriani potius quam Christiani effecti. De cetero tam Ostrogothis quam Gepidis parentibus suis pro affectionis gratia euangelizantes huius perfidiae edocentes, omnem ubique linguae huius nationem ad culturam huius sectae invitaverunt.⁹²

Immediately following this, they settle in the lands they had asked for.⁹³ Soon after, they suffer a famine; we might view this as a punishment for choosing the wrong religion, but we are told clearly that this happens “ut adsolet genti, necdum bene loco fundatis”.⁹⁴ Their suffering is exacerbated by the actions of the Roman generals. The Goths, still Arian, free themselves from these generals, and from then on begin “non ut advenae et peregrini, sed ut cives et domini possessoribus imperare totasque partes septentrionales usque ad Danubium suo iuri tenere”.⁹⁵ There is thus no indication whatsoever that the Goths were punished for their Arianism. Their later history is certainly glorious enough to obliterate this blight from the reader’s memory. Valens himself, though, is

91 *Getica*: 131. Ulfila is only mentioned briefly as the bishop of the Gothi minores, a peaceful people even now residing in Moesia (*Getica*: 267); this reference occurs much later in the narrative, and Ulfila is not clearly temporally located.

92 “And since the emperor Valens, smitten by the perfidy of the Arians, persisted against all the churches of our faith, he sent preachers to them who favoured his faith. When they came, they infected the uncultivated and inexperienced [Goths] there with the virus of their perfidy. Thus the Visigoths were made Arians rather than Christians by the emperor Valens. Furthermore, they evangelised among both the Ostrogoths and Gepids, their relatives, because of the affection in which they held them, and taught them this perfidy, and attracted everywhere every nation of the same language to the cultivation of this sect” (*Getica*: 132–3). Orosius (VII.xxxiii,19) provides the basic narrative; apart from making the Latin somewhat less elegant, Jordanes adds the conversion of the Ostrogoths and Gepids, and the adjectives with which the Goths are described.

93 *Getica*: 133.

94 “As it is wont to happen to a people that is not yet well settled in a place” (*Getica*: 134).

95 “To rule over the landowners not as immigrants and wanderers, but as citizens and lords, and to hold in their own law all the northern regions up to the Danube” (*Getica*: 137).

explicitly said to be punished by God: at Adrianople, where the Goths defeat the Romans, Valens hides in a hut to which the Goths set fire, and Jordanes, following Orosius, comments: “haut secus quam dei prorsus iudicio, ut ab ipsis igni conbureretur, quos ipse vera fide petentibus in perfidia declinasset ignemque caritatis ad gehennae ignem detorsisset”.⁹⁶

It is apparent that for Jordanes, Arianism is in itself to be condemned, but not the Goths, even though they are Arians: their religion is not their fault, and it certainly does not hinder them from glory in the world. Even at the very end of the work, when the still-Arian Goths are overcome by the Catholic Justinian's army, we are told that Justinian overcame the “famosum regnum fortissimamque gentem”; Jordanes ends by telling us that he has related the origin and “nobilitas” of the Amals, and that the Goths, a “laudanda progenies”, ceded to a “laudabiliori principi”.⁹⁷ Clearly, the taint of heresy does not diminish their praiseworthiness. The fact that the Arian Goths are defeated by orthodox Romans might be part of the reason for the hopeful end to the narrative: Jordanes says that the joining of the Anicii with the Amals gives—with God's favour (“domino praestante”)—hope to both peoples.⁹⁸

This is all we learn about the Gothic religion. Jordanes's *Getica* does not seem to be a work that is primarily trying to make a religious point; the history of the Goths is not here related to salvation history. The continuing Arianism and the past paganism of the Goths is glossed over or ignored in order that the Goths do not appear in a negative light: rather than stressing Gothic heterodoxy, Jordanes focused on Gothic triumphs, suppressing as much as possible the religious problematic in order to highlight the continuity between the distant and very recent past of their secular glory.

Goths and Romans: The Purpose of the Gothic Past in the *Getica*

What defines the Goths in Jordanes's narrative is primarily their history. Religion, geographical location, political unity or lack thereof, and the rule by a particular king or dynasty: none of these seem to be factors that unite the Goths, since each can, in the *Getica*, potentially include more than one people, not just the Goths. For Jordanes, the Goths' past is what sets them apart.

96 “It was because of nothing else but God's judgement that he should be burnt in fire by those who, themselves seeking the true faith, he had turned aside to perfidy and diverted them from the fire of love to the fire of hell” (*Getica*: 138; cf. Orosius: VII.xxxiii,19).

97 *Getica*: 313; 316.

98 *Getica*: 314.

It seems apparent, though, that for Jordanes, being a people did mean having some kind of historical tradition; this is, after all, what Jordanes claims he sets down, and what is distinctive about the Goths is indeed their history. The uniqueness of the Gothic past is defined by their origin in Scandza, their valour in battle, and their “long march” that eventually leads them to Rome; when the migration stops, so too does Gothic history.⁹⁹ Both Alaric and Theoderic go to Italy because they and their people do not wish to lead a life of “otium” and thus dilute their valour; Alaric continues to wander, whereas Theoderic and his people settle in Italy, and this ultimately brings about the end of an independent Gothic history.¹⁰⁰ This is the point also when Gothic history is first written, in Latin, by Cassiodorus.

If we are willing to see the *Getica* as a Gothic history in Roman form, drawing on and in a sense a successor to the lost history of Cassiodorus, then it would appear that differences between peoples do not come in the way of cultural assimilation as well. If the Gothic past has been made Roman history, then, given that their present is also under Roman rule, living by Roman law, and in the case of the scion of the Goths’ ruling dynasty, being married to a Roman, it seems that while Jordanes preserves what he calls the Gothic past, even by doing so he signals that their independence is partially subsumed by Rome—though this does not come at the cost of a total oblivion of what Jordanes identifies as Gothic history.

Although its unique characteristic is the ancient migration from Scandza, this history is fullest when the Goths are in contact with Rome, and from the time of Domitian, Gothic history is inextricably bound up with that of Rome.¹⁰¹ While the two peoples are initially antagonistic, they are shown to be complementary from the early fifth century; the early opposition of Goths and Romans is resolved in favour of a collaboration explicit in the phrase “Gothi et Romani”.¹⁰² In the context of the wars against the Huns, Goths and Romans are united in the phrase “*primas mundi gentes Romanos Vesegothasque*”.¹⁰³ Gothic valour is consistently praised—indeed this is one of the ways that the Gothic people is defined—and their might is depicted as indispensable for the defence of Rome.¹⁰⁴ But this very fact—that the Goths *defend* Rome, rather than succeeding it as a power in their

99 Reydellet (1981): 268–80.

100 *Getica*: 146–7 (Alaric); 290 (Theoderic). My reading here follows Reydellet (1981): 282–3.

101 Teillet (1984): 328–9; Domitian is at *Getica*: 76.

102 Teillet (1984): 307; 320. See *Getica*: 76; 78 (opposition of Goths and Romans); 142; 165; 166; 181; 213; 271; 272 (“Gothi et Romani”).

103 “The first peoples of the world, the Romans and Visigoths”; Teillet (1984): 314, referring to *Getica*: 181.

104 Teillet (1984): 320–1, referring to *Getica*: 111; 132.

own right—already signals Jordanes's perspective in praising the Goths: they are great, and they have an independent past, but they are also, ultimately, to be seen as properly subservient to Rome. Of course, he does not conceal the existence of an independent kingdom in Spain, which is an ally of Rome, but once Theoderic is established in Italy, it is his regent who rules Visigothic Spain.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, he is depicted almost like a western emperor, exercising authority over the whole of western Europe: "Nec fuit in parte occidua gens, quae Theodorico, dum adviveret, aut amicitia aut subiectione non deserviret".¹⁰⁶ But although in the *Getica*, Theoderic is portrayed as taking the initiative for the conquest of Italy, asking Zeno to grant him the "regnum",¹⁰⁷ and although he appears to rule as an independent king in Italy,¹⁰⁸ as he dies, he nevertheless instructs his heirs to respect the emperor after God: "senatum populumque Romanum amarent principemque Orientalem placatum semper propitiumque haberent post deum".¹⁰⁹ This seems to be an acknowledgement of the importance for the Goths both of imperial authority, and of the Roman institutions by which they legitimised their rule.¹¹⁰ Although Jordanes, unlike Isidore (see below), does not really depict the Goths becoming Roman themselves in terms of taking on Roman characteristics, from religion to rituals of rule, by the end of their history, their independence is subsumed within the empire; their distinctive characteristic of being itinerant is abandoned for a sedentary life in Italy; their history is written in Latin, Roman form. These factors taken together seem to spell the end of independent Gothic history: if there is any future, it will be fully conjoined with that of Rome.

From the preceding pages it will have emerged that the *Getica* can be read as an effort to make the Gothic past Roman, without, however, transforming it in such a way that there is nothing at all Gothic left in it. The Goths have (or have had) their own origin, stories, names, religion, and ethnic identity. They

105 *Getica*: 302.

106 "There was no people in the west that did not serve Theoderic either in friendship or in subjection, as long as he lived" (*Getica*: 303); Teillet (1984): 322.

107 *Getica*: 291. In contrast, see Jordanes's *Romana* (Mommsen, ed. 1882: 348–9), where Theoderic is sent by Zeno; the initiative comes from the emperor.

108 *Getica*: 295.

109 "They should love the Roman senate and people, and always ensure that the eastern emperor is pleased and propitiated after God" (*Getica*: 304).

110 As Teillet notes, Gothic kings always show great respect for the empire in the *Getica* (Teillet 1984: 323); while Gothic military might is indispensable, it is Rome that provides the institutions of senate and laws, which are equally necessary for a peaceful empire (Teillet 1984: 321). It has been argued that a similar ideology is enunciated in Cassiodorus's *Variae* (cf. Amory 1997: 43–78; Kakridi 2005: 339–47).

have had their own kingdoms, and they have ruled over Rome without becoming Romans. Nevertheless, they are now brought under the yoke of Rome, and they are, in the person of the heir to their ruling family, united with Rome, in the person of the heir to one of its most eminent families. These developments would presumably also bring about a change in religion (recall that Jordanes says this marriage bears hope “domino praestante”). If the Goths have been subsumed into the Roman empire, then the *Getica* is an absorption of their history into the authoritative cultural model of the written, Latin history, drawing on written, Latin and Greek sources.

This happens without, however, Jordanes ignoring the “*prisca carmina*” of the Goths themselves, or other sources that did not belong within the tradition of written history. The exact nature of Jordanes’s sources (or Cassiodorus’s, depending on the extent to which Jordanes drew on Cassiodorus), and the extent to which Jordanes *actually* used “*prisca carmina*” are here less relevant than the fact that this work produces the first written, self-consciously Gothic history, and *claims* (however vaguely and sporadically) to present Gothic tradition; and in doing so creates a written historical tradition for a people previously without one. That the Gothic past is actually a mélange of various non-Gothic pasts is also less important, if we wish to understand Jordanes’s purpose, than the fact that he explicitly claims this past as Gothic, and thus independent of the dominant historical traditions: the function of the Scandinavian past is to give the Goths something that makes them stand out as independent and distinct from, yet as old as or older than, the various peoples known in classical historiography.¹¹¹

One could argue that the text represents an attempt at bringing the Goths fully within the compass of Roman culture by transforming their history into a Latin, written narrative, in which the Goths, like their past, are ultimately subsumed within a larger Roman culture and polity. This transformation of Goths into Roman subjects in their historical narrative takes place, however, with a good deal of respect for Gothic independence. Continuity with the ancient, barbarian, non-Catholic past is stressed, as are the glories the Goths enjoyed in that past. Too little is known of Jordanes and his context to be able to determine exactly what the purpose and the audience of this text were, but it seems

111 Mortensen (1991): 94–5. We should remember also that while no previous author had assimilated Goths to other peoples to the extent that Jordanes did, he was not the first to confuse Goths with other peoples. His audience might not, therefore, have been as aware as modern scholars that he was appropriating the histories of other peoples to Gothic history, given that this confusion was shared with a number of sources, including such prominent ones as Orosius and Jerome.

safe to assume that it was intended to show some class of Goths that they could maintain their pride in what was projected as their own tradition, while nevertheless becoming Roman subjects. Some kind of conjunction between Goth and Roman is the ultimate aim of this text, even if it also has other, more or less immediate and political aims.¹¹² It is also clear that this is brought about through a process of secular history, not by the conversion of the Goths to Catholicism.

Although Jordanes wrote a history of the Goths when they had just lost their independence, his project nevertheless appears to be to effect through historical narrative a legitimisation of a barbarian past in order to praise a people who maintained a cultural tradition that in some aspects at least did not derive from Rome, and that was thought to be or presented as Gothic rather than Roman.¹¹³ The writing of the *Getica*, it could be argued, was an act not only of cultural translation—of Gothic origin into Roman history—but also of making legitimate a form of co-existence that acknowledged the dual influences of Roman and barbarian cultural inheritances, and in doing so stressed continuities in secular history rather than either religious breaks with the past, or ethnic differences. If we consider that Jordanes is known to us from two works, a history of the Goths, and a history of Rome, it seems to me that his project was in some sense to allow for the individuality of two kinds of cultural identity, which were, however, both subsumed under one political unit. The political unity of Goths and Romans brought with it some amount of cultural assimilation

112 The purpose of the *Getica* has been hotly debated. Some prominent views on the question: Goffart (1988) (it was a propaganda work intended to reconcile Goths to living under Roman rule); Heather (1991): 41–4; 52–61 (historical works are not suitable for propaganda; the pro-Gothic and pro-Amal parts of the *Getica* derive from Cassiodorus, whose purpose was solely to flatter his Gothic masters); Amory (1997): 302–4 (histories can be influenced by propaganda, and thus adhere to a particular partisan viewpoint; the purpose of the *Getica* was to emphasise the Goths' proper place, as Roman federates in the Balkans, not as independent rulers); Merrills (2005): 162–7 (agrees with Amory, but believes that Jordanes also intends to stress Gothic independence from Rome, which explains the Scandinavian origin myth); Liebeschuetz (2011a), and Liebeschuetz (2011b) (Jordanes's aim was to demonstrate the complementarity of the Roman and Gothic peoples and the value of their alliance, while simultaneously preparing his readers for the end of the world).

113 The Visigoths retained their kingdom, but there are no grounds for believing that Jordanes's text had any relation to the contemporary Visigothic polity in any way. In any case, Rome continued to battle against the Visigoths in Spain, and although these wars lasted until the early seventh century, their continuing independence would not by any means have been a foregone conclusion at the time Jordanes wrote the *Getica*.

(from the Gothic side) but nevertheless allowed for some preservation of cultural independence (in the form of an independent historical narrative).

Just as Theoderic had been “Gothorum Romanorumque regnator”, and had united in one polity two groups with distinct histories, so now Justinian, it could be argued, was “Gothorum Romanorumque regnator”; and the pair of histories produced by Jordanes seems to be an argument, based on history, in favour of Roman rule and cultural superiority, but nevertheless also supporting a distinct Gothic cultural identity of some sort, based on a sense of the Gothic past.¹¹⁴ The extent to which such a sense of ‘Gothicness’ was founded on authentically ancient, ‘pure’, Gothic tradition is thus not especially pertinent. It is surely possible, however, to assert a distinct cultural identity—and there can hardly be any dispute that Jordanes certainly intends to stress specifically Gothic glory and the Gothic past—even if this has been influenced by contact with other cultures, and even if the narrative of the people claiming this identity is in fact drawn from narratives about other people.¹¹⁵

Because of the erasure both of a Gothic polity and of Gothic culture and identity in Italy during the time Jordanes was producing his text, the *Getica*’s context is very different from the other works to be examined below. There are nevertheless some identifiable tendencies that we shall also encounter in each of the other Latin histories of the post-Roman kingdoms of western Europe: the assertion in Latin writing of the independent historical tradition of a particular culture for which there was no written precedent; the passing over of religious discontinuity; and the effort to bring the barbarian past within the ambit of Latin, written tradition. In the case of the *Getica*, this process took place in the context of a continuing Roman empire; Isidore of Seville’s Gothic history, to which we shall now turn, was written when Roman rule was itself in the past, but when a sense of continuity with Roman culture was nevertheless, for Isidore, still obviously quite present.

114 Liebeschuetz (2011b) presents a less detailed but similar argument to the effect that Jordanes was presenting a view of Goths and Romans as complementary to but distinct from each other; cf. already Ghosh (2009): 49–50, not cited by Liebeschuetz.

115 It is not my purpose here to examine how ‘Roman’ or not the rhetoric or practice of rule in the Gothic kingdom of Italy actually was, nor the extent to which earlier Roman norms survived in everyday life under that kingdom. There is no consensus in the scholarship, but it seems clear that many Roman elements were retained, while others were abandoned or fell into decay; it matters also whether one is seeking to understand the earlier or later periods in the life of Ostrogothic Italy. On these issues, cf. the differing perspectives presented in Amory (1997), and in the more recent studies of Arnold (2014); Bjornlie (2014); Heather (2007); Hen (2007): 27–58; Lafferty (2013); and Wiemer (2013), all of which also provide extensive further references to the vast and disputatious body of older scholarship.

Isidore of Seville's *Historia Gothorum*: Background, Summary, and Sources

Unlike Jordanes, whose life is a mystery to us, and who is known only from his two historical works, Isidore of Seville was one of the most prominent writers of the middle ages.¹¹⁶ He is famous, however, not so much for his historiography, but rather for his philosophical and theological works, and above all for his *Etymologiae*, an encyclopaedic compilation of gleanings from a wide variety of sources, which was vastly influential on medieval thought.¹¹⁷ Born c.560 to a Hispano-Roman family, Isidore was the younger brother of Leander, who became bishop of Seville shortly before 580, a position Isidore himself attained c.600. He was one of the leading churchmen in the Visigothic kingdom of Spain, and presided over important church councils in 619 and 633; he was also close to and received patronage from the monarchy, especially King Sisebut (612–21). Isidore died in 636; a brief biography was composed by his younger contemporary, Braulio, which gives us much information on his life and works.¹¹⁸

It has been argued that in his non-historiographic works, Isidore articulates a theory of secular rule very different from Roman imperial ideology: his theory of kingship is grounded on royal power being derived from God and the people, and the king's duty is to serve the community of Christians, whereas in imperial ideology, the rule of the emperor was an imitation of God (*mimesis theou*).¹¹⁹ This is probably the first manifestation of a theory of Christian kingship that was to prove very influential later in the middle ages.¹²⁰

Isidore's historical works comprise a chronicle that was essentially a continuation of the Eusebius–Jerome chronicle, and the *Historia Gothorum* (*HG*); both works are extant in two recensions.¹²¹ The *HG* is primarily a history of the Visigoths from the end of the third century to Isidore's own time, to which

116 On Isidore's life, works, and context, see Diesner (1973); Diesner (1977); Fontaine (2000); Wood (2012): 23–63.

117 Coumert (2007): 108–9, provides a brief discussion of the Goths in the *Etymologiae* (*Etym.*: IX.ii, 27; IX.ii, 89–90).

118 Braulio's biography is edited in Martín (ed. 2006), along with other, later *vitae*.

119 Reydellet (1981): 554–7; 584–97.

120 For a more detailed analysis of Isidore's theories of kingship, see Wood (2012): 138–47; 166–71; 175–9.

121 Other works of Isidore also exist in two recensions; it appears to be that the shorter version is in most cases a posthumous abbreviation (Collins 1994): 346–7.

were appended shorter narratives of the histories of the Vandals and the Sueves.¹²² The chronicle and the *HG* both have a clearly pro-Gothic character, and this, coupled with the praise of Spain that begins the longer recension of the *HG*, has led to the latter text being read as ‘Spanish nationalist’ literature.¹²³ My analysis will focus on the *HG*; accepting the consensus in the scholarship that Isidore wrote in support of Visigothic rule in Spain,¹²⁴ I shall show that the way he negotiated the merging of Gothic and Hispanic/Roman histories in Spain resulted in an act of cultural transfer as a means of legitimising the current polity. Before turning to the *HG*, though, we need to consider briefly the way in which the Goths are treated in Isidore’s chronicle.

Isidore draws on the chronicle tradition stretching back to Eusebius–Jerome, but with a few—often significant—innovations.¹²⁵ Unlike most works that followed in the wake of the Eusebius–Jerome chronicle, Isidore began his chronicle with Adam; in the longer redaction, he places the course of history into the Augustinian scheme of the six ages of the world. In the second age, the two

122 The chronicle is cited from Martín (ed. 2003); the other histories from *HG*. Scholarly opinion is divided as to whether the three histories should be treated separately or not. They are transmitted together, but with separate headings; Braulio’s testimony is the basis for viewing them as a single work. Rodríguez Alonso’s edition gives the three histories as one text, and since this is the edition used, they are thus cited below; this does not indicate an opinion regarding the status of the texts, and I indicate when I am not citing from the *Historia Gothorum*. For an overview of scholarship on Isidore’s historical writings, see Merrills (2005): 171–84; for interpretation of his aims as a historian with respect to his complete oeuvre, see Fontaine (2000): 217–33; and Wood (2012): 67–92. On Isidore’s theory of history as expressed in the *Etymologiae*, see also Borst (1966). For the broader context of historical writing in Visigothic Spain and Isidore’s place within this larger tradition, see Hillgarth (1970). Reydellet’s works are important analyses of how Isidore’s historical writings concord with the trend of his thought that emerges from his other works (Reydellet 1970; Reydellet 1981: 505–97). For a useful discussion of how Isidore’s depiction of Vandals and Sueves in the *Historia Wandalorum* and the *Historia Sueborum* compares with the image of the Goths he presents in *HG*, see Merrills (2006).

123 See for example Teillet (1984): 463–501, with references to earlier exponents of similar views; cf. Hillgarth (1970): 298–9. For a sophisticated recent account of Isidore’s partisan attitudes, with further references to earlier scholarship, see Merrills (2005): 171–228.

124 Wood’s recent monograph provides the most comprehensive treatment of all of Isidore’s historical writings as promoting a vision of a triumphant, Visigothic Spanish kingdom: Wood (2012); see also Koch (2012): 245–57.

125 On Isidore’s sources and his treatment of them, see Martín (ed. 2003): 25*–35*; Wood (2012): 92–130. On the differences between the two redactions and the chronicle’s place within the tradition, see also Martín (ed. 2003): 13*–24*.

peoples mentioned first are the Hebrews and the Scythians; Romulus only occurs in the fourth age.¹²⁶ Isidore thus makes the Scythians the second historical people, and older than the Romans. This is of some significance if we consider that both in the *HG* and in the *Etymologiae*, the Goths are said to be descended from the Scythians; because of their greater antiquity, the Goths therefore have a historical basis for rule over Romans.¹²⁷ Wolfram Drews argues, moreover, that since Isidore, following most patristic thought, believed that the Jews had forsaken their special place in history, the Scythians and their descendants are even more historically significant because in the chronicle, they occur just after the first chosen people of God.¹²⁸ Because the *HG* does not contain the scheme of the six ages of the world, this is the most important aspect of the chronicle that needs to be mentioned in support of a reading of the *HG* as depicting the Goths as historically destined for glory. In other respects as well, however, the chronicle, although constrained by the requirements of the genre, nevertheless provides a positive portrayal of the Goths contrasted with a negative image of Rome.¹²⁹

The chronicle says nothing further, however, regarding the distant past of the Goths, and as is normally the case with the genre, provides little detail, and does not focus on one specific people. While it is, insofar as the form permits, perhaps as pro-Gothic as the *HG*, the thrust of the chronicle is more religious than political.¹³⁰ A political focus is provided by the *HG*, which, unlike the chronicle, has no clear model;¹³¹ this suggests that for Isidore, boosting the Goths within the constraints of a chronicle was not enough: he (or his patron) obviously felt that they needed a history of their own, even if for this purpose Isidore needed to innovate slightly more than he normally did.

126 Martín (ed. 2003): 3; 21; 25–6; 143.

127 Drews (2002): 6–7, with reference to *HG*: 1, and *Etym.*: IX.ii, 27.

128 Drews (2002): 7–8; see also Wood (2012): 162–3, and Jamie Wood (2013): 153–5, on Isidore's treatment of the Goths' Scythian origins; and Wood (2012): 195–208, and Jamie Wood (2013): 135–9, on Isidore's treatment of Jewish history in his chronicles.

129 For example, the chronicle has a consistently negative view of the eastern empire, denying Rome and Constantinople any special status, and even after Constantine's conversion Isidore tends to portray the emperors as heretical or at least not sufficiently orthodox (Reydellet 1970: 389–99; Wood 2005: 39–49; Wood 2013); Rome has no special significance in salvation history, and appears to be just one of a series of 'regna' (Drews 2002: 8; Reydellet 1970: 393; 396; 398–9; Teillet 1984: 467); unlike his sources, which depict Gothic conquests using a passive formulation (for example, "per Gothos" or "a Gothis"), Isidore reports these events in the active voice, with the "Gothi" as subjects (Teillet 1984: 471).

130 Reydellet (1970): 397; Hillgarth (1970): 296.

131 Hillgarth (1970): 262.

There are two principal theories regarding why there exist two versions of the *HG*: the simpler solution is that Isidore himself revised and expanded his history later in his life; the other argument is that the longer version was the original one, and was shortened for political reasons by revisers after Isidore's death.¹³² There are, however, some reasons to doubt both theories. The shorter version appears not to be coherent enough, especially in its ending and its chronology, to be plausibly an authentic work of Isidore.¹³³ On the other hand, while the difference between the longer and shorter versions of the chronicle consists of expansions in the former, which contains everything also in the shorter version, there are some differences of content between the longer and shorter recensions of the *HG* that suggest authorial agency.¹³⁴ The longer version makes extensive use of the chronicles of Prosper and Hydatius, in addition to the lost history of Maximus of Saragossa, and is more focused on a praise of Spain and its kings; Roger Collins has argued that the shorter version was in essence an updated version of Maximus's work, whereas the longer recension is a more independent narrative, representing a progression in Isidore's thought.¹³⁵ Of the key differences, we may note that the *Laus Spaniae* with which the latter begins is not contained in the shorter recension; the longer version also has more to say on Arianism, even that of the Goths;¹³⁶ and it continues to the reign of Suinthila, who receives great praise. Overall, although even the shorter version praises the Goths, the longer recension appears to be more panegyric in its attitude, with the history of the Visigoths clearly leading up to the present unity of Catholic Spain under their rule.¹³⁷ In the following pages, I follow the view of the most recent editor, namely that both versions were by Isidore, and focus on the longer recension, though important changes with regard to the shorter version will also be noted.¹³⁸

132 Cf. Merrills (2005): 179–85; Collins (1994).

133 Collins (1994): 349–50.

134 Collins (1994): 350–3.

135 Collins (1994).

136 Collins (1994): 353, raises important questions as to why Isidore would have changed the focus of his interest in the longer recension; some of these, relating especially to the interest in Arianism, are answered by Wood (2005).

137 Rodríguez Alonso (1975): 31–9; Teillet (1984): 501. Overviews of the divergences between the two recensions are given in Collins (1994): 349–53; and Rodríguez Alonso (1975): 26–56; thorough analysis of both is presented by Wood (2012).

138 Rodríguez Alonso (1975): 26–56. Wood (2005) provides a thorough comparative analysis of both versions of both works with regard to their treatment of religious issues; although Wood's 2005 paper draws considerably on Drews (2002) in his interpretation of the longer recensions, Drews does not include the shorter versions in his discussion. Coumert

The narrative begins with a geographical introduction entitled *Laus Spaniae*, which ends by stating that although Romans once ruled Spain, it is now held by the Goths. This leads to an extremely brief discussion of the origin of the Goths; Isidore tells us that they may have originated from Magog, or that they might be “Getae”, but does not give us his own opinion.¹³⁹ The first five chapters take us up to the reign of Valens; during this time, the Goths are said to live in the Alps.¹⁴⁰ They resist Julius Caesar and overcome the eastern provinces of Rome, but are finally defeated by Constantine.¹⁴¹ In the second half of the fourth century, some Goths are Christians, and are persecuted by Athanaric, the Gothic king, and forced to seek refuge in Rome.¹⁴² After a brief description of the conversion of the Goths to Arianism,¹⁴³ the following chapters tell us of the Goths’ battles against the Romans, the sack of Rome, and the eventual settlement under Vallia in Aquitaine.¹⁴⁴ From this point, the narrative simply follows the expansion of the Visigothic territory into Spain, and their wars with a number of other peoples, including Romans, Huns, and Franks.¹⁴⁵ Isidore lauds the Arian king Leovigild for his conquest of most of Spain; immediately following this, though, Leovigild is described in unmistakeably negative terms because of his Arianism, and his successor Reccared is praised for adopting the orthodox faith.¹⁴⁶ Ending the narrative with the accession of Suinthila to the throne in 621, and the raising of his son Riccimir to co-ruler, Isidore provides a brief recapitulation, consisting primarily of unqualified praise of the Goths for their martial excellence.¹⁴⁷

Unlike Jordanes, Isidore devoted hardly any space to the origins of the Goths, or even their history before the late fourth century, from which period onwards he had access to a number of contemporary texts. The question of the

(2007): 113–19, also bases her interpretation of the *HG* on a comparison of the two versions.

139 *HG*: 1. The shorter version says that they descend from the Scythians; the *recapitulatio* (only in the longer version) elaborates on the first chapter, saying that the Goths and the Scythians share the same origins in Magog, son of Japeth (*HG*: 66). Cf. *Etym.* IX.ii,27; IX.ii,89, in which we are also told that the ancients called the Goths Getae.

140 *HG*: 4.

141 *HG*: 3–5.

142 *HG*: 6.

143 *HG*: 7–8.

144 *HG*: 9–22.

145 *HG*: 23–4 (Romans); 24 (Huns); 36, 41, 54 (Franks). On Isidore’s presentation of Visigothic military conflict with other non-Roman polities, see Wood (2012): 164–5.

146 *HG*: 49 (praise); 50–1 (negative depiction); 52 (Reccared).

147 *HG*: 62, 65 (Suinthila and Riccimir); 66–70 (recapitulation).

value of oral versus written sources does not really arise in this case: Isidore's history is a clearly learned work, drawing almost exclusively on known written sources, none of which belong demonstrably to any kind of Gothic tradition.¹⁴⁸ He would, however, undoubtedly have had access to oral eyewitness reports and his own memory for more recent history.¹⁴⁹ Almost all of the narrative concerns the period after the Goths had settled in Aquitaine, from where they expanded into Spain: older migration myths were clearly either unknown or uninteresting to Isidore. I shall focus in the following on the treatment of religious and ethnic differences, and in the conclusion to this chapter return to the implications of producing a written, self-consciously Gothic history, even if it is one that makes scant mention or use of any oral or non-Latin sources.

Religious Identities in Isidore's *Historia Gothorum*

The first mention of Gothic religion in the *Historia Gothorum* informs us that king Athanaric in the late fourth century persecuted all the Goths under him who were Christian; many were martyred, and others were forced to take refuge

148 For the period up to c. 410, Isidore's principal source is Orosius (see Cannone 1984 for a detailed comparison of Isidore's *HG* and Orosius); for the following years, he relies heavily on the chronicles of the fifth and sixth centuries (Hydatius, Maximus, Prosper, John of Bictar), themselves continuations of the Eusebius–Jerome tradition; and on his own chronicle, which also drew on and adapted many of the same sources. For source-criticism, see Rodríguez Alonso (1975): 70–119 (parallel texts of *HG* and sources); Collins (1994); Coumert (2007): 110–19; Merrills (2005): 188–98; 209–11; 215–18; 221–3; and Wood (2012): 92–130. Discussion of the source texts is provided by Muhlberger (1990): 48–135 (on Prosper), and 193–266 (on Hydatius); Collins (1994): 354–8 (on Maximus); and Cardelle de Hartmann (ed. 2001): 124–43, Hillgarth (1970): 266–84, and Teillet (1984): 428–55 (all on John). On Isidore's chronicle, apart from Martín (ed. 2003), Wood (2012), and Jamie Wood (2013), see especially Reydellet (1970); in addition, see Drews (2002), who compares the two works' treatment of ethnic difference. It is worth noting that Isidore follows even the wording of his sources very closely; his own perspective emerges from his few very brief elaborations and what he chooses to take or suppress from his sources.

149 Cf. Isidore's statement in the *Etymologiae* that the ancients only wrote history based on eyewitness accounts (I.xli.1–2); this could imply that he himself ought to have sought and used reports of eyewitnesses. At *Etym.*: IX.ii.118, Isidore mentions the “*opinio apud Gothos*” that they are related to the Moors; this is interpreted as deriving from oral tradition by Borst (1966): 28, n. 69. Diesner points out that Isidore appears to have had personal contact with at least some military leaders of his own time (Diesner 1977: 29), who might well have been able to inform him of events at least from the reign of Leovigild onwards.

in Rome.¹⁵⁰ The following chapter tells us that Athanaric sought Christian teachers from Valens, who, being a heretic, converted the Goths to Arianism. The shorter version only says that because of the help he received in overcoming Fritigern, Athanaric and the Goths became Arian.¹⁵¹ In contrast, as Jamie Wood has noted, the longer version makes Valens explicitly culpable for the conversion to Arianism:

Athanaricus Fridigernum Valentis imperatoris suffragio superans huius rei gratia legatos cum muneribus ad eundem imperatorem mittit et doctores propter suscipiendam Christianae fidei regulam poscit. Valens autem a ueritate catholicae fidei deuius et Arrianae haeresis peruersitate detentus missis haereticis sacerdotibus Gothos persuasione nefanda sui erroris dogmati aggregauit et in tam praeclaram gentem virus pestiferum semine pernicioso transfudit sicque errorem quem recens credulitas ebibit tenuit diuque seruauit.¹⁵²

150 *HG*: 6; following Orosius: VII.xxxii,9.

151 *HG*: 7: “Fritigernum Athanaricus Valentis imperatoris auxilio superans, huius rei gratia cum omni gente Gothorum in Arrianam haeresim deuolutus est” (“Athanaric conquered Fritigern with the help of emperor Valens; in acknowledgement of this, he, with the whole people of the Goths sank into the Arian heresy”).

152 “Athanaric conquered Fridigern with the help of emperor Valens; in acknowledgement of this, he sent messengers with gifts to the same emperor and asked for teachers in order to receive the rule of the Christian faith. Valens, however, straying from the truth of the Catholic faith and trapped by the perversity of the Arian heresy, sent heretical priests to the Goths and by abominable persuasion brought them together in the doctrine of his error. He implanted with a pernicious seed a pestilential virus in such a noble people, and they maintained and served for long the error that their recent credulity had absorbed” (*HG*: 7). On this passage, see Wood (2005): 24–7. Note further that unlike Orosius and Jordanes (*Getica*: 131–3), Isidore specifies that Athanaric—not anonymous “Gothi” as in the other texts—asked for teachers and priests. Like Jordanes, Isidore follows Orosius in his description of the conversion, but there is quite a significant contrast between Orosius and Isidore in terms of the weight given to heresy. Orosius says simply that “Valens imperator exitiabili prauitate doctores Arriani dogmatis misit. Gothi primae fidei rudimento quod acceperere tenuerunt. Itaque iusto iudicio Dei ipsi eum uiuum incenderunt, qui propter eum etiam mortui uitio erroris arsurus sunt” (VII.xxxiii,19: “The emperor Valens, in his pernicious depravity, sent teachers of the Arian doctrine. The Goths maintained the rudiments of the religion they had received. Thus by the just judgement of God they burned him alive, who, already dead in the sin of their error, shall burn because of him”). Isidore expands on the evil of Arianism (though one should note that Orosius inveighs against heresy at many other points): compare “Arrianum dogma” (Orosius) vs “Arrianae haeresis peruersitas” + “haeretici sacerdotes” + “nefanda persuasio” + “dogma sui erroris” + “virus pestiferum” + “perniciosum semen” (Isidore). However, Isidore also knows that, in the

Here Athanaric (the earlier persecutor of Christians) is shown asking for Christian teachers (and Isidore must in this context surely mean Catholics), but Valens converts the “*praeclara gens*” to Arianism. As was the case with Jordanes, Isidore builds on Orosius, but goes further than him; as in both the earlier works, the culpability in the longer version clearly rests with Valens, not with the Goths, and this would support the thesis that the longer version was intended to have greater, more one-sided praise of the Goths.¹⁵³ Moreover, because of this passage, with its contrast between “*fides Christiana*” and “*Arrianae haeresis perversitas*”, it seems likely that the first time the Gothic religion is mentioned, in the previous chapter, and there are said to be Christian Goths who have to escape to Rome, those Christians are to be understood as Catholics; the first Goths to enter Roman territory were therefore not Arians, but Catholics.¹⁵⁴

Isidore then goes on to describe Ulfila’s translation of the Bible into Gothic.¹⁵⁵ In the shorter version, all he says is that Ulfila translated the scripture. In the longer recension, Isidore tells us that after this the Goths began to write their laws and founded a church, though this was an Arian one; there follows a description and condemnation of Arianism, and the chapter ends by telling us that the Goths maintained this heresy for 213 years before converting to Catholicism. Wood suggests that Isidore in fact depicts the Goths in a positive light for trying to set up a church founded on scripture and law, never condemning them but only the heresy; but this is perhaps a little exaggerated.¹⁵⁶ We know, certainly, that the Goths are not to blame for their heresy, and it is also noteworthy that we are told already that they later convert to Catholicism not because of any outside force (unlike their first conversion) but because they are mindful of their salvation.¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the long descrip-

long run, the Goths will revert to the true faith; and unlike Orosius, for him they are a “*praeclara gens*”. The burning of Valens is depicted by Isidore in Chapter 9; we are told that Valens consigned the Goths’ souls to eternal flames (“*qui tam pulchras animas ignibus aeternis tradiderat*”), but the souls are here—unlike in Orosius—“*pulchrae*”, surely a sign of their innate goodness (and possibly godliness).

153 Drews (2002): 13, contrasts this with the depiction of the Sueves, who leave the Catholic faith because of their king, not because of an outside force; see *HG*: 90 (= *Historia Sueborum*).

154 Wood (2005): 24; 29–30. See also, for a comparison of Orosius and Isidore’s description of these Goths, Cannone (1984): 14–15; Cannone believes that for Isidore, these martyrs symbolise the entry of the Goths into salvation history.

155 *HG*: 8.

156 Wood (2005): 28.

157 *HG*: 8: “*reminiscentes salutis suae*”.

tion and condemnation of the Arian heresy that follows immediately after we are told that the Goths found a church could surely be read as overshadowing the positive image of the Goths to some extent. Wood is correct to point out, though, that “by flagging up their later conversion to Catholicism, Isidore telegraphed to the reader that this [the Arian heresy] was a historical discontinuity: in the long run it did not really matter”.¹⁵⁸

The tenth chapter of the *HG*, extant only in the longer recension, informs us that the Arian Goths encountered and had some conflict with the “*Gothi confessores*” who had earlier been exiled; we also learn that there were “*alii montuosa loca tenentes*” (“others inhabiting mountainous places”) who remained Catholic.¹⁵⁹ There is no mention of either the Gothic confessors or the mountainous Catholic Goths in any other source, though it is indeed possible that they might have existed; these Goths do not occur again in the narrative.¹⁶⁰ Given how closely Isidore normally cleaves to his written sources, it seems plausible that he here departs from them in order to counteract the Arianism of the main body of Goths: the ancient Goths included a Catholic group, and there were thus even in the distant past Gothic adherents to the true faith.¹⁶¹

In the description of the sack of Rome, Isidore describes Radagaisus as devoted to the cult of idolatry, and his attack of Rome is said to be savage.¹⁶²

158 Wood (2005): 28; similarly already Cannone (1984): 17 *et passim* (Wood does not appear to be aware of Cannone’s study).

159 *HG*: 10.

160 Wood believes that these Goths are invented by Isidore (Wood 2005: 29–30). However, Isidore was probably correct about the existence of Catholic Goths at this time. The passion of St Saba, from the late fourth century and referring to events of the early 370s, is about an explicitly Gothic and explicitly orthodox martyr, living in Gothic lands that are, moreover, not devoid of mountains (the text is in Delehaye, ed. 1912; see also Heather and Matthews, trans. 1991: 109–17); there exist also contemporary mentions of bishops of apparently Nicene Goths outside the borders of the empire throughout the fourth century and beyond (Mathisen 1997: 670–6). Though there are no known sources for specifically mountain-dwelling Catholic Goths, many of the regions within and at the borders of the Roman Empire inhabited by Goths in the fourth century could fairly be described as mountainous. Thus it is possible that Isidore drew on some sort of garbled transmission of fourth-century sources about such Goths; at any rate, it seems likely that there were indeed Catholic Goths from the beginning of the fourth century, at the time of Athanaric, and even after the settlement of the (Visi-)Goths within Roman territory, and that Isidore was therefore not completely incorrect. This needs to be kept in mind when judging the extent to which Isidore manipulated “facts” to portray the Goths positively (none of the major studies of the *HG* appear to be aware of this historical background).

161 Cannone (1984): 18; Wood (2005): 29–30.

162 *HG*: 14: “*cultu idolatriae deditus*”; cf. the shorter version, where he is called “*paganus*”.

In both recensions, he promises the blood of the Romans to his gods should he be victorious.¹⁶³ Alaric, in contrast, is said to attack Rome in revenge for the death of Radagaisus, and is described as Christian, though heretic; his attack on Rome is notably milder, and he does not fight Romans in churches.¹⁶⁴ The shorter recension tells us that many thousands of Romans survived because of this clemency, and that they prefer even now to live in the “regnum Gothorum” as paupers rather than to pay tribute and live under Roman rule; the longer version tells us that the Goths were merciful because they waged war only against the Romans, not against the apostles. While not passing over the heresy of Alaric, Isidore seems to be at pains to make his readers see “that a Christian Goth was better than a pagan one”, and that though Arian, the Goths were nevertheless “the most ‘catholic’ Arians possible”.¹⁶⁵

After this, we hear nothing of Gothic religion until the very recent past of the sixth century, and even then it receives only two brief mentions until we come to Leovigild, a king who ruled in Isidore’s own lifetime. We are told that Theudis, though heretic, allowed the Catholic bishops to assemble freely, and that Agila attacked a church.¹⁶⁶ Leovigild receives a rather mixed portrayal. He increases considerably the size of the Gothic kingdom, and we are told that he was able to do so “praeclare”.¹⁶⁷ He conquered the Sueves “mira celeritate”, and he added to the laws of the Visigoths.¹⁶⁸ Nevertheless, Isidore says “offuscauit in eo error impietatis gloriam tantae uirtutis”.¹⁶⁹ We are told of his persecution of Catholics at some length,¹⁷⁰ before he dies and is succeeded by Reccared, a very different sort of king: “namque ille inreligiosus et bello promptissimus, hic fide pius et pace praeclarus; ille armorum artibus gentis imperium dilatans, hic gloriosus eamdem gentem fidei trophaeo sublimans”.¹⁷¹ Under Reccared, the

163 *HG*: 14.

164 *HG*: 15–16. For an interpretation of the depiction of the sack of Rome as favouring the Goths, see also Wood (2012): 150–2.

165 Wood (2005): 31; 33. Note that in other respects, Isidore’s account of the sack of Rome (*HG*: 14–17) is substantially based on Orosius (VII.xxxvii).

166 *HG*: 41; 45.

167 *HG*: 49.

168 *HG*: 49; 51.

169 “The error of impiety obscured in him the glory of such valour” (*HG*: 49).

170 *HG*: 50–1.

171 “For the former was irreligious and most skilled in war, the latter pious in his faith and noble in peace; the former expanded the rule of the people by the arts of arms, the latter, glorious, raised the same people with the trophy of faith” (*HG*: 52). Although Reccared is clearly the more positive figure in this passage, there is nevertheless a sense that the deeds of Leovigild are in some way brought to fruition by Reccared: the one united Spain,

Goths convert to Catholicism,¹⁷² and enjoy the greatest victory they have ever had over any people.¹⁷³ Reccared is described as a very pious, generous, merciful and peaceful king, the perfect Christian monarch.¹⁷⁴

Rather oddly, the revolt of Hermenigild is mentioned only very briefly, and all we are told is that his father Leovigild suppressed it.¹⁷⁵ Isidore nowhere mentions that Hermenigild was Catholic—information surely available to him, given that Hermenigild was based in Seville, and that Isidore's brother Leander was not only Hermenigild's ambassador to Constantinople, but also apparently instrumental in the prince's conversion.¹⁷⁶ For Isidore, Hermenigild occurs only as a pretender to the throne; in this he follows John of Biclar. Given Leovigild's Arianism and Hermenigild's Catholicism, Isidore's attitude might seem odd, but is relatively easily explained: although the Catholic Church had supported Hermenigild, he was unsuccessful; his younger brother Reccared, however, also converted to Catholicism in 587, and, like Leovigild, was politically strong, ruling over a unified Spain.¹⁷⁷ Reccared had not supported his brother during the uprising; more importantly, remembering an unsuccessful rebellion against politically legitimate authority could be embarrassing at a time when the ruler had become a supporter of the Catholic Church, and when it was in the interests of that Church to support a politically unified kingdom. From the point of view of a Church interested in maintaining and supporting the hierarchy, eulogising someone who had rebelled against it would scarcely be appropriate. Furthermore, Hermenigild's revolt had been, in admittedly uncertain and probably not very tangible ways, supported by the Roman empire; remembering him shortly after the last Roman outposts in Spain had been conquered would surely have been unseemly.¹⁷⁸ Clearly, Isidore, in the

the other makes united Spain Catholic (Reydellet 1981: 539–40). No such comparison exists in Isidore's sources for this period.

172 *HG*: 53.

173 *HG*: 54: "Nulla umquam in Spaniis Gothorum uictoria uel maior uel similis extitit" ("No victory of the Goths in Spain was ever greater or comparable").

174 *HG*: 55–6.

175 *HG*: 49.

176 Hermenigild's revolt is depicted in two contemporary narrative sources: Gregory of Tours (*DLH*: V,38); and John of Biclar (Cardelle de Hartmann, ed. 2001: 53–4, 57, 60, 64–6, 68, 73). Gregory the Great portrays Hermenigild as a Catholic martyr (de Vogüé, ed. 1978–80, vol. 2: III,31). For discussion of the events and the narratives about them, see Collins (2004): 56–9; Diesner (1973): 10–11; Giese (2004): 146–7; Heather (1996): 282; Hillgarth (1966).

177 I summarise here Hillgarth (1966).

178 See *HG*: 62 for Isidore's depiction of these last conquests of Roman forces.

way he approaches this episode, values the unity of Spain more than the memory of a renegade prince who endangered that unity, and places politics over religion in his depiction of this conflict between Arian and Catholic.¹⁷⁹

If we compare Isidore's history to that of Jordanes, we see that the later author, in the longer recension of his Gothic history, paid more attention to the heresy of the Goths. Given his position in the Church, this is hardly surprising. We note also, though, that he takes some care to portray even the Arian Goths in a largely positive light. Their conquest of Rome is gentle, and certainly preferable to conquest by pagans; their heresy (like that of Jordanes's Goths) does not prevent them from consistently achieving victory in battle, often at the expense of the Catholic Romans.¹⁸⁰ Although Leovigild's Arianism overshadows his achievements, his expansion of the kingdom is nevertheless depicted in laudable terms.¹⁸¹ Furthermore, Isidore tells us about early Catholic Goths, a means of showing that there was always a strand of Goths adherent to the true faith. All of this seems to indicate that while the theologian Isidore—a man who had, moreover, experienced in his own lifetime the conflicts between Catholic and Arian¹⁸²—could hardly pass over Arianism as easily as did Jordanes, the historian is clearly interested in presenting a view favourable to the ruling secular force in Spain, which was now also Catholic.

Isidore watered down past transgressions against orthodoxy in favour of a unified, positive history of the Goths, in which their religion posed little problem. One could see this as 'Realpolitik' taking precedence over religious views, but in fact, given the closeness of the Catholic Church (personified not least by the bishop of Seville) to the monarchy, there was actually little separation between the realms of politics and religion. If, by downplaying past heterodoxy, Isidore produced a propagandistic work in support of the current monarchy, he also equally supported the cause of the Catholic Church, which would only benefit from a strong ruler who supported it. In his treatment of religion, therefore, Isidore demonstrates that the continuity between the glories of the past and the powerful in the present was far more important than religious difference. A similar perspective informs his treatment of ethnic identity and conflict between Goths and Romans.

179 A similar conclusion is reached by Wood (2012): 221–2.

180 For a more extended discussion of Isidore's presentation of Gothic 'virtus', see Teillet (1984): 477–81.

181 Teillet (1984): 487–8.

182 Drews (2002): 3–5; Diesner (1973): 10–11; Fontaine (2000): 101–11.

Goths, Romans and Barbarians in Isidore's *Historia Gothorum*

Unlike Jordanes, who calls his Goths barbarians, Isidore uses the word only once of the Goths, otherwise reserving it for other non-Roman peoples.¹⁸³ The sole occasion on which Goths are defined by this term is in Isidore's description of Radagaisus; as we have already seen, though, Isidore clearly wished to designate Radagaisus as a 'bad' Goth, to be contrasted to the main body of Goths, who were less savage, and also Christian.¹⁸⁴

Not being barbarian, though, does not necessarily make the Goths Roman. The Goths are consistently opposed to the Romans throughout Isidore's narrative, and are often distinguished from the Romans by their greater 'virtus',¹⁸⁵ which legitimises their succeeding to Roman rule over Spain.¹⁸⁶ The might of the Goths is indeed the very first quality of theirs to be mentioned in the *HG*, and in Chapter 2 of both recensions, although the word 'virtus' is not used in the longer version, we learn that the Goths made a strong impression on both Alexander and Caesar:

Interpretatio autem nominis eorum in linguam nostram tectum quo significatur fortitudo, et re uera: nulla enim gens in orbe fuit quae Romanum imperium adeo fatigauerit [long recension]. Isti enim sunt quos etiam

183 Jordanes uses the term three times explicitly of Goths: Dicineus is said to restrain their barbarian customs (*Getica*: 69); Maximin is described as "semibarbarus" (*Getica*: 84), and as rejoicing "more barbarico" (*Getica*: 85). In addition, although when he says that they are wiser than all barbarians (*Getica*: 40), it is not certain that this implies that they too are barbarians, such a reading seems most likely. Note, though, that even Jordanes uses the term only with regard to the pre-Christian Goths, but never applies it to Goths after they have become Christian. In his *Etymologiae*, Isidore appears to suggest that the primary difference between barbarians and Romans is one of language: "Appellatus autem barbarismus a barbaris gentibus, dum latinae orationis integritatem nescirent. Vnaquaqueque enim gens facta Romanorum cum opibus suis vitia quoque et verborum et morum Romam transmisit" (*Etym.*: I.xxxii,1: "It is called barbarism from the barbarian peoples, since they did not know the purity of the Latin language. For each people, having been made Roman, brought to Rome along with its wealth also its vices with regard to words and customs"; cf. also *Etym.*: IX.i.7). This is a clear acknowledgement that barbarians can become Roman; the adoption of Latin appears to be the key component in this transformation.

184 Drews (2002): 12; Teillet (1984): 492. On Radagaisus, see *HG*: 14.

185 Cannone (1984); Drews (2002): 9–10; Teillet (1984): 477–83; see also Muhlberger (1998) for a comparative study of early historians' views on military prowess.

186 Diesner (1973): 23–4.

Alexander vitandos pronuntiavit, Pyrrhus pertimuit, Caesar exhorruit [both recensions].¹⁸⁷

The Goths are shown to enter history as opponents of notable ancient peoples, including the Romans; given that the other peoples disappear from the narrative soon enough, this portrayal appears to demonstrate an ancient enmity between the two polities.¹⁸⁸

Soon afterwards, Claudius receives special honour for defeating the Goths,¹⁸⁹ and Constantine is said to be great because of his victory over many peoples, “sed de Gothorum uictoria amplius gloriosus”.¹⁹⁰ “Romulea uirtus” is said to have been betrothed to “Hispania” at the beginning of the work, but is soon replaced by the “Gothorum florentissima gens”; in the *Recapitulatio*, it is only the “virtus” of the Goths that is mentioned.¹⁹¹ In describing Theodosius, Isidore quotes Orosius almost verbatim, but suppresses the latter’s mention of the emperor’s “virtus”;¹⁹² the Goths thus become partners of Rome only because they perceive the goodness (“benignitas”) of the emperor, not because of his might.¹⁹³

187 “The meaning of their name is in our language a roof, by which is signified strength, and truly there was no people in the world that exhausted the Roman Empire so much. These are the ones whom Alexander said should be evaded, whom Pyrrhus feared, of whom Caesar was terrified” (*HG*: 2; this last sentence follows very closely Orosius: I.xvi,2; Orosius, however, says that the Goths were formerly called “Getae”). Isidore here draws on Jerome’s interpretation of the name Gog (Glorie, ed. 1975: xI,38, at p. 527). The shorter version adds that the “Romani eorum uirtutem experti sunt” (“the Romans experienced their might”).

188 Teillet (1984): 470.

189 *HG*: 4.

190 “But more glorious for his victory over the Goths” (*HG*: 5).

191 *HG*: *Laus Spaniae*; 67; 70.

192 Teillet (1984): 479.

193 *HG* 11: “Gothi autem proprio rege defuncto adspicientes benignitatem Theodosii imperatoris inito foedere Romano se imperio tradiderunt” (“The Goths, however, with their own king dead, seeing the goodness of emperor Theodosius, gave themselves to Roman rule by means of a treaty”); Orosius: VII.xxxiv,7: “Vniuersae Gothorum gentes rege defuncto aspicientes uirtutem benignitatemque Theodosii Romano sese imperio dederunt” (“all the peoples of the Goths, with their own king dead, seeing the valour and goodness of Theodosius, gave themselves to Roman rule”). Note that before this, according to Orosius, Theodosius is the agent in bringing about a “foedus” (VII.xxxiv,6), whereas Isidore has Athanaric as the agent sealing his friendship with the emperor (*HG*: 11); Isidore also tells us that before dying, Athanaric was honourably received by Theodosius (*HG*: 11: “a Theodosio honorabiliter susceptus interiit”), whereas Orosius simply says he came and

A look at the depiction of the Vandals, both in the *Historia Gothorum* and in the *Historia Wandalorum*, highlights the way Goths are given special treatment by Isidore. As federates of Rome, the Goths defeat many barbarians, including the Vandals; the Vandal barbarity ("barbaries") is put to flight by the Goths; Vandals, Sueves, and Alans are described as barbarians; the Vandal attack on Rome is notably more savage than that of the Goths; unlike the Goths, the Vandals are shown to persecute Catholics.¹⁹⁴ Furthermore, although Isidore tells us little enough about the origins of the Goths, he does say that they descend from the biblical Gog and Magog, as well as the Scythians, whereas no other barbarian group has any such ancient and biblical origin.¹⁹⁵

Though clearly distinguished from the Romans, however, the Goths also take on many Roman characteristics (especially after their arrival in Spain).¹⁹⁶ The sack of Rome is described in distinctly positive and triumphal terms, and there is a clear inversion of roles implied in Isidore's use of the words "victrix" and "victa", and "domina" and "famula":

died (vii.xxxiv,7: "Athanarius continuo ut Constantinopolim uenit, diem obiit"). On these passages, see already Cannone (1984): 18–19.

194 HG: 22; 68; 73; 77; 75 (the last three references are to the *Historia Wandalorum*). For comparisons of Isidore's treatment of Goths and other barbarians, see further Diesner (1977): 33; Drews (2002): 12–13; Merrills (2006); Teillet (1984): 492; Wood (2012): 154–61.

195 HG: 1; 66; Drews (2002): 13. Jerome, whose work Isidore certainly knew, reads Gog and Magog as negative figures (Glorie, ed. 1975: xi,38, at pp. 525–33); and they could thus have posed problematic origins for the Goths even in Isidore's presentation. Cannone (1984) argues that the identification with Gog and Magog is intended to underscore Gothic valour; while these biblical figures could have had negative connotations, he suggests that their use is intended to show how the Goths proceed through salvation history, gradually adding to their military 'virtus' a Christian valour as well. In this reading, the potentially negative qualities of the ancient past are thus necessary to demonstrate the progression in salvation history. Coumert points out that though Isidore undoubtedly knew Jerome's negative reading of Gog and Magog, he only took from Jerome those elements that could have a positive impact on his history of the Goths (Coumert 2007: 113–15); similarly, Mortensen (1991): 91, argues that Isidore simply ignored the possible negative connotations of these figures, and based himself on the neutral biblical accounts in Genesis and Chronicles (Ex 10.2; I Par 5.4) as opposed to Ezekiel (38–9) and Jerome's commentary.

196 Thus, from different perspectives, Drews (2002); Hillgarth (1970): 269–70; 309; Teillet (1984): 463–501; Wood (2005). On the preservation of Roman culture in Visigothic Spain and in the writings of Isidore, see Fontaine (2000), summarising his voluminous earlier work; cf. also Diesner (1973); Diesner (1977). Note that Isidore does not acknowledge any heterogeneity within the Visigothic kingdom, and does not let us perceive any differences between Goths and Romans living under Visigothic rule; there is no 'Hispano-Roman' people in his work (Diesner 1973: 68; Koch 2012: 259–72).

sicque urbs cunctarum gentium uictrix Gothicis triumphis uicta subcubuit eisque capta subiugata seruiuit;¹⁹⁷

ut Roma ipsa uictrix omnium populorum subacta captiuitatis iugo Geticis triumphis adcederet et domina cunctarum gentium illis ut famula deseruiet.¹⁹⁸

Rome, formerly the “victrix” over all peoples, is now “victa”; the “gens Gothorum” is the “domina” of Rome, which had earlier been the conqueror of all the nations.¹⁹⁹ Furthermore, in the description of the battle against the Huns at Châlons in 451, the Roman general Aetius is mentioned as an auxiliary of the Goths;²⁰⁰ other sources simply say Romans and Goths fought together.²⁰¹ It is also surely no accident that the word “triumphus” is only used in the context of Gothic victories over Romans in this text (even though Roman victories are also depicted),²⁰² and the first time it occurs it describes the Goths’ victory at Rome—the traditional place for triumphs of the Roman emperors to be celebrated. By the end of the text, the Goths have not only conquered all of Spain and subjugated the Romans there; they have also taken on a number of Roman

197 “Thus the city that was conqueror of all peoples was conquered by Gothic triumphs and succumbed, and captured and subjugated to the Goths, served them” (HG: 15).

198 “As Rome herself, victor over all peoples, forced into the yoke of captivity, yielded to Gothic triumphs, and the mistress of all peoples served them [*scil.* the Goths] like a maid” (HG: 67).

199 Teillet (1984): 484–5.

200 HG: 25: “auxiliante Aetio duce Romano” (“with Aetius, the Roman leader, assisting”); see also Teillet (1984): 486.

201 Cf. e.g. Hydatius: “Aetio duci et regi Theodori, quibus erat in pace societas” (Burgess, ed. and trans. 1993: § 142); the *Gallic Chronicle of 511*, s. a. 450/451: “Aezius patricius cum Theodorico rege Gothorum” (Burgess, ed. 2001b). The lengthy description in Jordanes’s *Getica* (185–218) also has the Romans and Goths as allies; the Goths are not included in the list of Roman auxiliaries at *Getica*: 191. As Teillet points out, this is possibly the point in which the Goths receive the highest praise in the *Getica* (Teillet 1984: 317–18); but the Goths and Romans are at most partners here, which is quite different from the wording in Isidore.

202 In addition to Chapters 15 and 67 cited above, see HG: 62: Sisebut is said to have greater triumphs than all other kings just after we are told he defeated the Romans in Spain (“urbes residuas, quas in Spaniis Romana manus agebat, proelio conserto obtinuit autamque triumphii gloriam prae ceteris regibus felicitate mirabili reportauit”: “joining battle [against the Romans] he took the remaining cities that the Roman army controlled in Spain, and with remarkable good fortune brought back a glory of triumph greater than other kings”).

qualities, including of course the Catholic religion.²⁰³ In fact, even when Arian, the one defeat of the Goths by Romans that Isidore reports is caused by the piety of the Arian Goths, who do not fight on Sundays.²⁰⁴ Although the Romans are the Catholics here, it is they who defile the holy day; the Goths are more pious even before their conversion to the orthodox faith.²⁰⁵ The Goths now have written laws;²⁰⁶ they rebuild Rome's walls;²⁰⁷ they hold games;²⁰⁸ and the Gothic king founds a city named after his son.²⁰⁹ In the shorter recension, we are even told how Leovigild adopts imperial regalia.²¹⁰ In addition, Leovigild, following the example of Constantinople rather than that of most of his Visigothic predecessors, attempted to enforce religious uniformity in Spain. Although of course condemned by Isidore, this could also be seen as an imitation of Rome.²¹¹

It seems evident that Isidore opposes Goths to Romans because he wants to show the Goths succeeding the Romans, and also 'becoming' Roman in their

203 Drews (2002): 13–14; Hillgarth (1970): 269–70.

204 *HG*: 42.

205 Hillgarth (1970): 277; Merrills (2006): 41; Teillet (1984): 487. As Wood has demonstrated, in his chronicle, Isidore consistently presents Rome as less pious and in fact tending towards heterodoxy, as part of his effort to present Rome in a negative light in comparison to Gothic piety: Wood (2005): 39–49; Wood (2012): 148, 150, 191–2; Jamie Wood (2013): 139–48.

206 *HG*: 35; 51. The earliest extant legal collections, the laws of Euric and the *Breviarum* of Alaric, are, moreover, almost exclusively 'Roman' in nature, with little that is distinctly Visigothic about them (Collins 2004: 224–31; Harries 2001; Hillgarth 2009: 14).

207 *HG*: 39. The reference here is to Theoderic the Ostrogoth's activities; he is never, in Isidore's text, explicitly called a Goth, and on his first mention is only defined as "Italiae rex" (*HG*: 36). Coumert has argued because of this that Isidore does not show any relationship between Theoderic's Goths and his own (Coumert 2007: 123). This is not quite accurate: Isidore does tell us that Theoderic restores to the Goths a part of their kingdom lost to the Franks (*HG*: 36); that he becomes king of the Goths in Spain (*HG*: 39); and that his grandson Amalaric rules after him in Spain (*HG*: 39).

208 *HG*: 70.

209 *HG*: 51.

210 *HG*: 51. Cf. Reydellet (1981): 532–33, on this passage: he argues that the adoption of regalia was a means of showing that the king was not king just of the Goths, he was now ruler of both of Goths and Romans.

211 *HG*: 50; my reading follows Hillgarth (1970): 270. Reydellet claims that Isidore "ne pouvait pas comprendre le lien entre cette politique religieuse et la volonté d'unification du roi" (Reydellet 1981: 530); I would argue that Isidore understood it only too well, but kept the two kinds of unification strictly separate in his portrait because of his own religious politics: he praises Reccared for doing much the same thing, the difference being that Reccared is Catholic.

political culture.²¹² It has been noted before that Isidore depicts the Goths as performing a kind of ‘imitatio imperii’.²¹³ This impression is heightened when one considers the use of the word ‘imperium’ in his history. Until the reign of Reccared, it refers consistently to the Roman empire, and never the Gothic kingdom. In the chapter on Leovigild’s reign, we are told that he enlarged the “regnum”.²¹⁴ Shortly after this, however, we are given a narrative about Reccared and his assumption of the throne; Reccared is the king who converts to Catholicism and achieves a greater victory for the Goths than any other.²¹⁵ In this context, Leovigild’s expansion of the kingdom is mentioned again, but here Isidore refers to Leovigild as broadening the “imperium”.²¹⁶ It is thus only once a Catholic monarch rules that the Goths can be said to have an ‘imperium’ (even if the monarch said to have expanded this ‘imperium’ was not himself Catholic).²¹⁷

Throughout the *HG*, the political identity of the Goths is opposed to the Roman empire: Goths fight Rome repeatedly, and their defeat of Rome is celebrated on various occasions. At the end of the work, Isidore, still clearly distinguishing between Goth and Roman, tells us that the Roman “miles” now serves the Goths.²¹⁸ While Spain had earlier been a Roman province, it is now secure in the rule of the Goths.²¹⁹ Andrew Merrills has argued persuasively that the *Laus Spaniae* and the *Recapitulatio*, which functions as a ‘Laus Gothorum’, are intended as a diptych, the joint function being to highlight the successful union of Spain and the Goths;²²⁰ this union takes place only from the reign of the first Catholic king Reccared.²²¹ Certainly, the *HG* overall clearly propagates

212 As we have seen, Isidore acknowledges that barbarian peoples can be made Roman (see above, n. 183). He also believes that peoples originate in languages, not the other way round (*Etym.*: 1X.i.14: “ex linguis gentes, non ex gentibus linguae exortae sunt”). These statements in the *Etymologiae* would appear to support a reading that he portrays the Goths as becoming Roman; they have certainly adopted the Roman language.

213 Diesner (1977): 94; Drews (2002): 14–15.

214 *HG*: 49: “ampliare regnum [...] statuit”.

215 *HG*: 52, 53 (conversion); 54 (victory).

216 *HG*: 52: “ille [...] imperium dilatans”.

217 The term “imperium” is used once more referring to Suinthila’s reign (*HG*: 63); it is also used in the *Laus Spaniae* and the *Recapitulatio* to refer to the reign of the Goths in Spain. On Isidore’s terminology for ethnic and political entities (“gens”; “imperium”; “populus”; “regnum”), see Adams (1969); and Borst (1966): 22–8. See further Adams (1997) for the usages of other Visigothic writers.

218 *HG*: 70.

219 *HG*: *Laus Spaniae*.

220 Merrills (2005): 197–9; 226–7.

221 Reydellet (1981): 525.

a positive view of Gothic rule over Spain, and portrays a unified identity in Spain under one 'regnum'. In this regard, it seems to accord with the evidence of other seventh-century texts, which portray an ideology of a united people living in the 'patria' of Spain, and ruled by one king.²²²

The Function of Gothic History: Isidore and Jordanes Compared

There is no parallel in Isidore to the conjunction of Goth and Roman that we find in Jordanes's *Getica*; even when the two peoples collaborate, as at the Battle of Châlons, in the *Getica*, they are allies, whereas for Isidore, the Romans are auxiliaries. Jordanes brings Goths and Romans together, and even dissolves the political independence of the Goths; they remain, though, 'Gothi et Romani'. For Isidore, Goths and Romans are always opposed, and ultimately he shows the Goths as not only politically independent and militarily superior, but also taking on many forms of Roman political culture, in addition to the Roman religion. In contrast to Isidore, Jordanes, while certainly portraying the Goths positively, does not do so at the expense of the Romans; as we have seen, the victory of Justinian is praised, and the depiction of the Gothic wars shows the Romans in a positive light.²²³ Nor does Jordanes show the Goths becoming Roman in a manner akin to Isidore: his depiction of Theoderic's rule says nothing about the extent to which this reign embodied a continuity with Roman traditions.²²⁴ Isidore mentions Theoderic's rebuilding of Rome's walls, but Jordanes does not;²²⁵ the depiction of Theoderic's reign is in fact remarkably muted in the *Getica*. The many ways in which Gothic rule, as depicted by Isidore, seems to draw on Roman practice in a manner that makes Goths appear Roman, are not paralleled by anything in Jordanes's portrayal of the Gothic kingdom in Italy. The term 'imperium' is used by Jordanes for the Roman empire of course, but also with regard to the Goths, even before they become Christian²²⁶; however, since it is also used of the rule of the Huns, it seems

222 Adams (1969); Adams (1997); Teillet (1984): 524–33; 552–6. That this is not just a matter of ideology is suggested by the results of Koch's study, which encompasses all the documentary sources and laws, as well as the narrative material, and finds that already by the middle of the sixth century, all those living in the Visigothic kingdom were seen as 'Gothi', and there was no real perception or enforcement (legal or otherwise) of an ethnic divide between 'Goths' and 'Hispano-Romans' (Koch 2012).

223 *Getica*: 16; 307–15.

224 *Getica*: 295–304.

225 *HG*: 39.

226 *Getica*: 98; 112; 253.

to not to have exclusively Roman connotations.²²⁷ The only 'triumphus' of a Goth is that of Theoderic, when he is adopted by Zeno; this ceremony of adoption could be read as symbolising the subsuming of the Goths by the Romans, in line with the arguments presented above, and is certainly very different from Isidore's conception of Goths *replacing* Romans.²²⁸ Although one Goth, Maximin, does become Roman emperor, this is not followed by the establishment of a Gothic-Roman 'imperium', and in fact appears to have no consequences at all; it seems to be a not fully successful attempt at curbing the "mos barbaricum" with "Romana disciplina".²²⁹

The purpose of Jordanes's *Getica* appears to be to diminish any sense of independent Gothic political identity, while nevertheless asserting a form of independence from Rome, manifest in an independent historical tradition. If the Goths in the *Getica* 'become Roman' it is primarily because their political identity is subsumed by Rome. Jordanes does, to be sure, turn the Gothic past into a Roman history (not least because it is now written, and in Latin); and the Gothic past he writes is, from the modern scholar's perspective at any rate, far from authentically 'Gothic'. But even the act of writing such a history confers some legitimacy to a sense of Gothic cultural heritage and identity, and preserves a measure of difference. Isidore, however, does not seem to be interested in Gothic history as a means of creating or legitimising any sense of Gothic *cultural* independence; it does not, for Isidore, appear to be a way of asserting an independent Gothic cultural identity anchored in an independent Gothic history. Isidore's Gothic history is more a means of political propaganda in favour of the Goths, showing, perhaps paradoxically, how 'Roman' they have become.

In both texts, it is clear that Romans and Goths may be united under one rule, and indeed under Gothic rule. The Gothic kingdom in Italy, however, was short-lived, and Jordanes clearly intends Roman political authority to be understood as superior, whereas Isidore does everything possible to diminish it. The 'gens Gothorum' are in Isidore's work clearly a political unit, opposed to Rome; their ancient past, oral tradition, pre-Christian religion, and customs are

227 *Getica*: 247; 248; 253; 259; 272; see also Suerbaum (1977): 276–7.

228 *Getica*: 289.

229 *Getica*: 83–8. Goffart finds the passage so irrelevant to the plot of the *Getica* that he proposes it is inserted primarily for comic relief, but also to demonstrate what happens when a Goth becomes emperor (Goffart 1988: 81–2). Teillet (1984): 315, suggests that Maximin is a prefiguration of Theoderic; she does not note, though, that both are unsuccessful Gothic attempts to rule Rome, the second of which is followed by the complete destruction of Ostrogothic independence.

never discussed, and their history is drawn from Latin, Roman, written works.²³⁰ They themselves adopt Roman religion and other markers of Roman culture, while remaining resolutely anti-Roman in their politics. For Isidore, therefore, the purpose seems to be to show how the Goths have succeeded Rome politically, and that they now legitimately rule over Romans²³¹; in terms of cultural heritage, however, it is the inheritance of Rome that is predominant for him. Although even Jordanes eventually absorbs Gothic history within Rome, he nevertheless does give the Gothic past a distinctive shape; Isidore does not attempt to provide the Goths with an independent narrative of ancient history, and knows nothing of any Scandinavian migrations, or indeed any narrative of their past independent of their contact with Rome. The Goths, in Isidore's work, do not just enter history as opponents of Rome; they exist historically only insofar as they have been in contact with Rome and its territories, including the (formerly) Roman territory of Spain.²³²

Such an interpretation is consistent with the rest of Isidore's oeuvre, which is, after all, in many respects an effort to preserve the inheritance of Roman antiquity for posterity, but in which this culture has no political associations with the (still extant) empire; Isidore only wished to deny significance to Rome as a political entity, while preserving a literary and religious culture he considered independent of Roman 'imperium'.²³³ Perhaps significantly, while both authors wrote two historical works, there is a sense of balance between Jordanes's Roman and Gothic histories, both in that they are 'national' histories, and with regard to the positive portrayals of the main subjects. Isidore's other history was a chronicle, not a history of Rome alone, and even in the chronicle, Rome is, to the extent the genre allows, diminished in favour of the Goths. For Jordanes, the Goths *complement* Rome, but Rome is still dominant: the Goths may preserve an identity, but this is ultimately subordinate to Rome. In Isidore's work, the Goths *succeed* Rome; this means that they take on the qualities that make Rome special: military might and the Catholic religion, in

230 Adams has suggested that while in late antique texts, 'gens' did not normally have a political significance, in seventh-century Spanish works, beginning with Isidore, the term 'gens' signifies a polity (Adams 1969; Adams 1997). This could indicate a shift from a primarily cultural or historical understanding of the term to a largely political one. Teillet argues that in the works of Isidore and of John of Biclar, the 'gens Gothorum' takes shape after its conversion to Catholicism (Teillet 1984: 524–7); this is not implausible, but is not, to my mind, sufficiently anchored in the actual usage of the term in Isidore's histories.

231 A similar argument, with regard to Isidore's chronicles, is presented in Jamie Wood (2013): 160–3.

232 Reydellet (1981): 517.

233 Borst (1966): 27; Reydellet (1970): 393–4; Teillet (1984): 464.

addition to the Roman language, written culture, and laws.²³⁴ For Isidore, the Goths thus become, in a cultural sense, Roman—but this inheritance is completely divorced from any political identity.²³⁵

The corpus of Isidore's writings preserves much that was inherited from Rome, and the thrust of his works is consistently against heterodoxy; altogether, however, there is nothing in his thought in support of the notion—present in, for example, Orosius, one of Isidore's principal sources—that Rome's political existence was necessary to preserve Rome's cultural inheritance.²³⁶ Jocelyn Hillgarth has rightly pointed out that after the political collapse of Rome in the west—something that would not have appeared inevitable in Jordanes's time—the models of Christian history presented by Eusebius—Jerome and Orosius, which married Roman 'imperium' to the Catholic Church, were necessarily hard to hold on to; there was no option, if a political history was to be written, other than transferring the "providential mantle with which Eusebius had invested Rome and Constantine" to the post-Roman kingdoms and their rulers.²³⁷ Isidore's historical works "constitute a declaration of independence on the part of Visigothic Spain and an affirmation of its worth against the ancient mistress of the Mediterranean world [...] The *Historia Gothorum* proclaimed *political* independence".²³⁸ Isidore's histories thus perform an act of transferring to the Visigothic kingdom the role in salvation history Orosius had assigned to Rome.²³⁹

Jordanes's *Getica* and Isidore's *Historia Gothorum* thus present us with contrasting ways of integrating a barbarian, pre-Christian or pre-Catholic past with the dominant cultural inheritance of Rome and the Catholic Church. The two approaches are conditioned to a very great extent by their historical context: Jordanes wrote at a time when the Gothic polity was in fact in the process of being extinguished (by Rome!), but when there were still Goths of the Amal line who might perhaps have been able to exercise some influence on the outcome

234 Thus also Jamie Wood (2013): 161–2; see already Ghosh (2009): 73.

235 As Hillgarth (1970) argues, this kind of portrayal is common to much of the extant historiography from Visigothic Spain, although Isidore presents it in perhaps the most clear manner.

236 On Orosius's historical theology, cf. Goetz (1980a); Inglebert (1996): 507–89; and van Nuffelen (2012).

237 Hillgarth (1970): 264–5; quote from 265.

238 Hillgarth (1970): 296–7.

239 We should note with Reydellet, though, that Isidore does not portray Catholic Gothic kings in an unambiguously positive light: although his criticism is minimal, especially when compared to the kind of providential role the Goths play in Spain's history, it is nevertheless not entirely absent (Reydellet 1981: 528–30).

of the conflicts Jordanes lived through. For him, it could make sense to praise the Gothic past, while still promoting the absorption of the Gothic present by Rome. But for Isidore, in the context of early seventh-century Spain, now fully Catholic, with a minority Gothic population, ruled by laws that were founded on late Roman legal developments, there was little need to try and promote a sense of independent Gothic ethnic or cultural identity—indeed, there may have been very little such identity left, given that the prime marker of difference between Goths and Romans, their religion, was no longer an obstruction.²⁴⁰

Goths and Romans had lived alongside each other in Spain for nearly two centuries by the time Isidore wrote his histories; in contrast, little more than two generations had elapsed between Theoderic's arrival in Italy and the composition of Jordanes's *Getica*. There was likely to have been a greater sense of a discrete Gothic identity in Italy than in Spain; Jordanes could possibly have had more of a potential audience that perceived itself as distinctly Gothic, as opposed to Roman or Italian, than would have been the case in Isidore's Spain.²⁴¹ Isidore was, moreover, also a senior figure in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, a theologian devoted to preserving the cultural and religious inheritance, inescapably tied with Rome, on which he had been raised.²⁴² He supported the

240 On the coexistence and cooperation between Roman and Gothic elements of the population in government, see Heather (1996): 193–4; 210–15; see also Mathisen and Sivan (1999): 28–37, on the Aquitanian kingdom of the fifth century. On continuities in social and economic organisation, see Collins (2004): 161–74; and Wickham (2005): 219–32. On the conscious adoption of Roman forms of political self-representation, inspired by the royal court, see Hillgarth (1966); and Hillgarth (1970); on the 'latinisation' and 'Romanisation' of the Visigothic population, see Hillgarth (2009): 45–50. Teillet (1984): 552–5, finds that Goths and Romans alike seem to be understood as belonging to the 'gens Gothorum' in literary sources of the seventh century. Collins rightly points out that the 'Roman' part of provincial identity in the later empire meant, for most, simply having the rights of citizenship (Collins 2004: 242), and implications with regard to ethnicity are unclear; provincial affiliations were probably stronger than an empire-wide sense of ethnic identity. He argues also that in Spain, a Visigothic identity developed without much trouble after the religious barrier was removed, but this identity was tied to the political and religious unity of a geographical region, not to any distinctively Visigothic language, law, custom, or religion (Collins 2004: 239–46). The most recent and exhaustive treatment of the issue is Koch (2012); Koch arrives at similar conclusions regarding the lack of division between 'Roman' and 'Gothic' identity.

241 Furthermore, Cassiodorus would have interacted with the first generation of Gothic arrivals in Italy, who would certainly have had a sense of identity distinct from that of other Italians; this fact could be of some importance, depending on how much we believe Jordanes was dependent on Cassiodorus.

242 On these aspects of Isidore's thought, see e.g. Borst (1966); Fontaine (2000).

Gothic 'regnum' in Spain because it kept united a region that had—and this had been the case even under Roman rule—a sense of its own distinct identity, but more importantly, because the Goths ruled a united Spain under the religious guidance of the Catholic Church. As a number of studies have shown, Isidore's historical works can profitably be understood as extensions of his theology: they support a Gothic kingdom, to be sure, but a Catholic one, which is the important point.²⁴³ Spain could not be united under the Romans as long as the Goths remained powerful; it could not be united under the Goths as long as they remained Arian; but the community of believers is shown to prosper under Catholic rulers who are independent of Rome. Isidore presents this view not least because Rome, in his thought, had no special place in salvation history, and was replaced by the newly-Catholic Goths as the last great kingdom before the Day of Judgement.²⁴⁴

The Goths' past was to have an illustrious future, and not just in the middle ages; the Scandinavian origin myth became one of the most popular origin narratives of our period, and the Ostrogothic kings Theoderic and (to a lesser extent) Ermanaric became prominent figures in vernacular legend. Both these aspects of the reception of Gothic history will be considered further in Chapter 7; both are closer to Jordanes's portrayal of the Goths than that of Isidore. Moreover, while Isidore's political support of a post-Roman polity was clearly paralleled by other texts narrating the barbarian and pre-Christian pasts of post-Roman kingdoms, his ignorance or suppression of Gothic historical traditions is markedly different from what we find in a later history that we shall examine which deals specifically with the distant past of a barbarian people: Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum*. Before turning to Paul, though, I present an analysis of the Frankish origin narratives, which differ, in the way they merge barbarian and Roman histories, both from the models presented by Jordanes and Isidore, and the later work of Paul.

243 Drews (2002); Hillgarth (1970); Reydellet (1970); Reydellet (1981): 505–97; Wood (2005); Wood (2012); Jamie Wood (2013). Isidore's conception of history in his non-historical works accords with the perspective set out here: see Borst (1966); and Diesner (1977): 26–34.

244 On the place (or lack thereof) in Isidore's theology of Rome and the Gothic kingdom, see Borst (1966): 42–7; Drews (2002): 7–8; Hillgarth (1970): 298; Löwe (1952): 364–70; Reydellet (1970): 393; 398–9; Teillet (1984): 466–7.

The Origins of the Franks

There is no ‘history of the Franks’ from their early period, though there are certainly texts that provide plenty of Frankish history. In this chapter, I provide analyses of the earliest narratives of Frankish history up to the reign of Childeric, the first securely attested Merovingian king. For the most part, I shall be comparing the early eighth-century *Liber Historiae Francorum* (*LHF*)—the first ‘national’ history of the Franks, in that it is devoted solely to Frankish history—and the mid-seventh-century ‘Fredegar’ chronicle, though the histories of Gregory of Tours from the end of the sixth century will also be used for comparison where appropriate. The first two sections of this chapter are introductory, providing an overview of Frankish history, and a survey, in chronological order, of these three texts and their contexts, along with brief summaries of their narratives of early Frankish history. I then move on to a discussion of the narrative of the Trojan origins of the Franks, followed by analyses of its sources and its function.

The Historical Background to Frankish Historiography

The Franks first appear in historical sources from the end of the third century, as a people on the boundaries of the empire who engaged in raids against Rome and were settled by the emperors along the Rhine border.¹ Like the Goths, the Franks are known to have been federates or allies of the Romans from the fourth century; individual Franks served in the Roman army, with some of them reaching very senior positions.² There appear to have been several

- 1 The earliest mentions of “Francus”/“Franci” are in the Latin panegyrics on the emperors Maximian (286–305; *Pan. lat.*: VII[V].iv,2; XI[III].v,4; XI[III].vii,2), Constantius Chlorus (305–6; *Pan. lat.*: VIII[V].xvii,1–2; xviii,3; xxi,1; IX[IV].xviii,3), and Constantine (307–37; *Pan. lat.*: IV[X].xvii,1; VI[VII].v,3; xi,3; XII[IX].xxiv,2). “Francia” occurs in two panegyrics on Constantine (*Pan. lat.*: VI[VII].vi,2: “Franciae nationes”; *Pan. lat.*: VI[VII].x,2: “Reges ipsos Franciae”). Aurelius Victor, writing in around 361, has references to Franks for c.260 (Pichlmayr and Gruendel, eds 1966: 33), but it is uncertain whether this is reliable or is a projection of his own time into the past.
- 2 See Chapter 1, n. 31 above, for some examples. Fourth-century references to Franks are conveniently collected in translation in Murray (trans. 2000: 1–20). For a prosopographical study of Frankish and potentially Frankish military men of the fourth and fifth century, see Ruggini

more or less distinct peoples who were grouped together under the confederate title of 'Frank', and the panegyric on Constantine refers to a "terram [...] a diuersis Francorum gentibus occupatam" even as early as the end of the third century.³ It is not clear, however, to what extent this reflects the self-perceptions of the people the Romans called Franks; both the use of the ethnic designator and the notion that the Franks were a confederacy are more likely to manifest Roman perspectives on them than their own concepts of their group identity. Some of these peoples continue to be mentioned as having a contemporary existence in sources for several centuries afterward.⁴ It is scarcely possible to compose a narrative history of the Franks from contemporary evidence before the end of the fifth century, as the material is too fragmentary; it is only from this point that the sources become more coherent, with the rise of the Merovingian Franks under Clovis. There was probably no effective imperial administration in northern Gaul by the early fifth century; and over the course of that century, the Franks appear to have taken the place of the Romans as the military authority, adopting, however, many Roman norms.⁵ Although by the early sixth century the Franks, now largely unified under Clovis, were clearly the dominant powers in most of Gaul, the region nevertheless appears to have remained essentially Roman in terms of culture and the forms of administration at this point.⁶

The Merovingians (c.480–751) created a kingdom comprising most of what are now modern France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and parts of modern Germany and Switzerland;⁷ under the Carolingians (751–987), Frankish rule

(1997). On Frankish relations with Rome in the fourth and fifth centuries, see Ewig (2006): 9–11; Halsall (2007): 267–71; James (1988): 35–44; 51–8; Wood (1994b): 36; a survey of the scholarship is provided in Kaiser (2004b): 15–17. For the broader political background, see Halsall (2007): 71–9, and the survey of the scholarship in Kaiser (2004b): 3–7; 66–74.

3 "Land occupied by diverse peoples of the Franks" (*Pan. lat.*: VI[VII].v.3).

4 Ewig (2006): 12–17; James (1988): 35–8; Kaiser (2004b): 14–24; 80–4; Wood (1994b): 35–6; Wood (1995): 53–4. Note, however, that the people called 'Franks' by the Romans do not seem to have been an ethnic or culturally united group, and were only united politically in the late fifth century (Goetz 2003): 309–18.

5 Ewig (2006): 12–17; Halsall (2007): 84–5; James (1988): 51–8; Kaiser (2004b): 7–15.

6 Ewig (2006): 18–31; 52–71; 97–112; Goetz (2003a): 315–19; James (1988): 64–91; Halsall (2007): 143–4; 152–61; 242–5; 303–10; Kaiser (2004b): 15–24; 84–92; Wickham (2005): 178–81.

7 Accessible overviews of Merovingian history are provided by Ewig (2006); Wood (1994b); and James (1988), who pays more attention to archaeological evidence and material culture than the others; Ewig's text, though the most recent of these three surveys, is surprisingly ignorant of important recent scholarship (especially in English), for example the many works of Halsall and Murray that treat of Merovingian social and institutional history. For a very useful,

was extended over most of the rest of what are now Germany, Italy and Austria, and under Charlemagne (768–814), the Franks were unquestionably the most powerful rulers of western Europe, with the most extensive reign, since the Roman empire.⁸ Under Charlemagne, the Franks established a new empire: Charlemagne was crowned emperor at Rome in 800, reviving the title of Roman emperor in western Europe, a title that remained in use for the next millennium, though in the tenth century it passed from the Franks to their successors east of the Rhine, the Saxons.⁹

Gregory, Fredegar, and the *LHF*: Background and Summaries

Gregory of Tours: Decem Libri Historiarum

Georgius Florentius Gregorius came from a prominent Gallic family, and was bishop of Tours from 573 until his death in 594. In the 590s, he wrote a ten-book history that focused on the Frankish kingdoms.¹⁰ Despite later editorial titles, this was not a ‘history of the Franks’. Gregory was not himself of Frankish ethnic origin, and seems to have been little concerned with Frankish origins or identity; the differences that concerned him were of religion, between Catholics and heretics.¹¹ His ten books of history are the principal contemporary

succinct overview of the scholarly debates (including the major works in English), see Kaiser (2004b).

- 8 The best overview in English for Carolingian history is given in Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean (2011), though their narrative stops in 888 with the death of the last ruler of the dynasty in the Carolingian heartland; for a longer perspective, see McKitterick (1983). Schieffer (2006) provides a crisp—but strictly political—narrative, focusing on the Carolingian dynasty. On the figure of Charlemagne, of the large number of biographies, see in particular those of Becher (2003); Collins (1998); and Fried (2013); see also McKitterick (2008) for a biography that takes a broader view of the period, less focused on the personality of Charlemagne himself.
- 9 On the imperial coronation and its implications, see Becher (2003): 81–119; Collins (1998): 141–59; McKitterick (2008): 114–18; and Schieffer (2004); on the broader context of the creation of a Carolingian empire, see Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean (2011): 154–69; and McKitterick (2008): 103–36. Reuter (1991): 148–80 provides a succinct introduction to the early Saxon monarchy and imperium.
- 10 The fundamental study for Gregory’s *Histories* is Heinzelmann (1994b); an important alternative reading is provided by Goffart (1988): 112–234.
- 11 On Gregory and the Franks, and Gregory’s own biography and sense of identity, see Goetz (2003a); Goetz (2004); Goffart (1982); Heinzelmann (1994b): 7–83; Heinzelmann (1994a); James (1998); Plassmann (2006): 117–47. On the date of Gregory’s histories, see Murray (2008). Weidemann (1982) provides an extremely useful thematically oriented guide to

narrative source for the history of Gaul/Francia in the sixth century, and are in fact incomparable in detail and scope to any other narrative from the period from any part of western Europe. They proved to be immensely popular in the following centuries, though largely in an abridged, six-book version;¹² both Fredegar and the *LHF* are based substantially on Gregory's work.

The first book of Gregory's *Histories* begins with Adam, and covers, for the most part, biblical and Roman history, moving towards Gaul with the narrative of the life of St Martin, with whose death the book ends. The second book covers the history of Gaul in the fifth century; chapter 9 provides the most information we get from Gregory regarding the ancient history of the Franks. By the middle of this book we have reached the reign of Childeric, and book II ends with the death of Childeric's son, Clovis, the king who, according to Gregory, united the Franks, and was their first Christian ruler.¹³ By the end of book II, therefore, we are at the beginning of the sixth century, and within a generation of Gregory's birth; the rest of the work concerns the very recent past and the events of Gregory's own lifetime.

Gregory's knowledge of Frankish history before the mid-fifth century is vague, and is only expressed as a part of a quest for the origins not of the Franks, but of the institution of kingship among them. According to Gregory, it was a common belief that the Franks left Pannonia and came to the borders of the Rhine,¹⁴ and the first kings Gregory knows of, from one of whom, Merovech, the Merovingians were descended, are from this period in Frankish history.¹⁵ It is not entirely clear from his narrative when this migration took place. Although we are told that at this time the Franks were pagan, little else is said about their ancient past.¹⁶ For the rest of the work, Gregory does not reflect on Frankish identity in opposition to any other kind of identity.¹⁷

Gregory's information on Merovingian history and culture. On the predominantly religious orientation of Gregory's *Histories*, Heinzelmann (1994b) is fundamental.

12 On the manuscript history, see Goffart (1987); Heinzelmann (1994b): 167–75; Reimitz (2003); Reimitz (2006): 89–93.

13 Specifically on Clovis's conversion, see Daly (1994); Shanzer (1998); and Wood (1985). For an overview of the (often rather fraught) scholarship on Childeric and Clovis, see Kaiser (2004b): 84–92. The most thorough and recent study of Clovis is that of Matthias Becher (2011).

14 *DLH*: II,9: "Tradunt enim multi, eosdem de Pannonia fuisse degressus".

15 *DLH*: II,9.

16 *DLH*: II,10.

17 The fundamental works for Gregory's use of ethnic terminology are Goffart (1982), Heinzelmann (1994a), and James (1998); see also Goetz (2003a), and Goetz (2004). Gregory uses the term Frank only sparingly in the sections of his work dealing with the sixth

Since Gregory says little about the subject of the present work—the distant, barbarian, pre-Christian past—his *Histories* are not examined in much detail below. However, it is important to bear in mind that the narratives of origins presented by both Fredegar and the *LHF* are in large part embedded within borrowings from Gregory. The two later texts might thus be considered efforts to update Gregory's *Histories* not just with regard to more recent events, but also in terms of the depiction of the distant past, as a means of bringing the principal extant narrative of Frankish history in line with current views of that past and its present utility—views that might have been only those of these individual authors, or might have reflected more widely held theories among the aristocracy. For this reason, a comparison with Gregory's *Histories* as the background to both Fredegar and the *LHF* is necessary.

The 'Fredegar' Chronicle

The next narrative history for the Franks that survives is the so-called 'Fredegar' chronicle, an unwieldy work from c.660 composed in rather inelegant Latin, which begins in the form of a universal chronicle, but by its second half focuses almost exclusively on the history of the Franks, and is now based largely on Gregory's *Histories*; book III is explicitly said, in the title, to be excerpted from Gregory.¹⁸ We know nothing about the author, except that he probably wrote in Burgundy, and was affiliated with the Burgundian aristocracy.¹⁹ It has been suggested that the text was actually written by two authors, though in recent years, this theory has not garnered much support.²⁰

century, primarily to designate the polity ruled by the Merovingian kings (in phrases such as 'regnum Francorum'); 'Romanus' is not used in any sixth-century context. Gregory's avoidance of 'Romanus' and related terms, and his preference for regional identifying markers for the Gallo-Roman people he mentions, is examined in some detail by Krutzler (2013): 515–23.

- 18 The most recent and thorough introduction to Fredegar is Collins (2007), which focuses on authorship and manuscript transmission; a discussion of Fredegar's sources is at pp. 27–38; 46–55. See in addition the recent studies of Coumert (2007): 295–301, and Plassmann (2006): 147–50. On the content and context of the narratives of Frankish origins, see Coumert (2007): 293–324; Ewig (1998); Ewig (2001); Giardina (1998); Murray (1998); and Plassmann (2006): 147–74. On possible contemporary political contexts for the composition of the Fredegar chronicle, see also Wood (1994a); and most recently Reimitz (2013): 278–80. On the manuscript transmission and its implications, see further Reimitz (2006): 93–101.
- 19 Note, though, the cautions voiced by Collins: we know really too little about Fredegar to be certain about his location or affiliations (2007): 20–1.
- 20 The single-author theory was most convincingly propounded by Goffart (1963) and Erikson (1965), and is adopted by Collins (2007), Scheibelreiter (1999), and Scheibelreiter

The first book takes us from creation to the early Roman emperors, and contains almost nothing original, essentially providing the text of the Eusebius–Jerome chronicle. The second book continues in the format of a universal chronicle, with entries on Romans, Hebrews and Assyrians, but also introduces the Franks and their Trojan past;²¹ there is, furthermore, a growing focus on the history of the Roman emperors and on the western empire. Like the first book, book II has little that is original, primarily presenting the text of the Eusebius–Jerome chronicle, though the author inserts more individual words and sentences of his own than he does in book I. However, book II also contains a few chapters that are completely unprecedented, providing more or less legendary narratives about non-Frankish figures, including Theoderic, the Ostrogothic king of Italy, and the emperor Justinian.²² The third book is based primarily on Gregory, but with more interpolations, once again of narratives that appear to be of a legendary nature. Book IV is largely original, providing a political narrative of the Franks from the late sixth to the mid-seventh century. From book III, the focus of the chronicle is almost exclusively on Francia.²³ In the present chapter, I examine Fredegar's origin narratives of the Franks, which occur in books II and III. This text is the earliest to provide us with a narrative of Trojan origins of the Franks. A somewhat different version is presented in the first Frankish narrative history that we could compare to the *Getica* and Isidore's Gothic history, in that it focuses on a single people and their history from their origins to the present: the *Liber Historiae Francorum*.

The Liber Historiae Francorum

The first real 'history of the Franks' is the *Liber historiae Francorum* (*LHF*), composed in the 720s, a work of resolutely Frankish, secular, political history.²⁴ It was written by an anonymous author at a time when the Merovingian dynasty was being eclipsed by the Pippinids, ancestors of Charlemagne; the text seems to be firmly in support of the Pippinids, and is anchored within the

(2002); see further Collins (2007): 8–25, for a survey of the scholarship on authorship. Gerberding (1987): 13–17 argues that there were two authors, and is followed in this by Ewig (1998), and Ewig (2001). Coumert (2007): 301, Giardina (1998), Martínez Pizarro (2006), and Plassmann (2006): 148–9, remain noncommittal.

21 Fredegar: II,4–6; 8–9.

22 Fredegar: II,56–9; II,62.

23 For a reading of Fredegar as an assertion of Frankish identity, see Reimitz (2013): 278–92.

24 The most detailed study is Gerberding (1987); see in addition Coumert (2007): 325–39, and Plassmann (2006): 174–88.

cultural and political context of eastern Francia in the early eighth century.²⁵ The first chapter tells us of the origins of the Franks, and the following four chapters take us up to the reign of Childeric in the middle of the fifth century. A fair amount of space is given to his son, Clovis; he enters the narrative in chapter 9, and dies only in chapter 19 (the work has a total of 53 chapters). The sixth century receives quite detailed coverage, the seventh less so. The text ends with the rise of Charles Martel, the grandfather of Charlemagne (c.688–741).

It has been remarked that unlike Gregory, Fredegar, and especially the author of the *LHF*, adopt a “heroic mode” of storytelling.²⁶ Both are interested in ‘legendary’ narratives, and seem to highlight some form of Frankish identity. Both texts draw substantially on Gregory, but use, for example, the word ‘Francus’ much more than he does;²⁷ this has led to the reasonable assumption that while Gregory was concerned primarily with depicting the history of his time within a framework of salvation history, and was thus more interested in religion and religious difference,²⁸ Fredegar and the *LHF* have more immediate, secular political concerns.²⁹

The Trojan Origin of the Franks

Fredegar gives us two complementary versions of the Trojan origin of the Franks, in book II, interpolated into Jerome’s chronicle, and in book III, interpolated into excerpts from Gregory’s histories.³⁰ According to Fredegar, the

25 For an introduction to the text and its context, see Gerberding (1987): 1–10; 146–72; cf. more recently Coumert (2007): 325–8, and Plassmann (2006): 174–5. On the reception and use of the *LHF* in the Carolingian period, see McKitterick (2004a): 389–93. For an unusually unconvincing argument that the author was a nun, see Nelson (1996); cf. Coumert (2007): 327–8. On the early Carolingians and the political history of the early eighth century, the context in which this text was produced, see Becher (2003): 29–35; Collins (1998): 15–31; Costambeys, Innes, and MacLean (2011): 31–69; Ewig (2006): 181–206; McKitterick (1983): 16–40; McKitterick (2008): 57–71; Schieffer (2006): 11–49; Wood (1994b): 255–85. On the manuscript context and the use of this text in the Carolingian and later periods, see also Reimitz (2006): 93–103.

26 Goffart (2002): 376–7.

27 Goetz (2004); Reimitz (2003); Gerberding (1987): 166–9.

28 Heinzelmänn (1994b).

29 Gerberding (1987): 159–60; Plassmann (2006): 174; 186; Reimitz (2012); Reimitz (2013).

30 Fredegar: II,4–6; III: 2; III: 9.

first king of the Franks was Priam.³¹ After the Trojan War, the Franks left Troy, and one group of Franks went to Macedonia, eventually bringing forth Alexander the Great.³² Another group of refugees went to Phrygia, under their king Frigas.³³ In book II, Fredegar says that this group later had a king called Francio, from whom they derived their name.³⁴ Under Francio, the Franks settled between the Rhine, the Danube, and the sea, having travelled through Asia and fought with many peoples.³⁵ Diminished by battles and the splitting off into various groups, the Franks eventually settled on the Rhine.³⁶ While they were in their central European (not yet Rhenish) location, with Pompey ruling Rome, the Franks were briefly subjugated by the Romans after the death of Francio;³⁷ they were quick to shake off the Roman yoke and we are told that “post haec nulla gens usque in presentem diem Francos potuit superare”.³⁸ Fredegar also tells us of another group that derived from the original Trojans, whom he calls “Torci”;³⁹ this term presumably refers to Turks, who appear to have had contact with Constantinople in the sixth century.⁴⁰ Fredegar might have heard the name from material brought to Francia in the course of the many diplomatic contacts between the Merovingians and the empire.⁴¹

In book III, Fredegar is more precise about the process of bifurcation of the original Trojans, specifying that the Phrygians split into two groups, one of whom went through Asia and settled along the Danube; the other group wandered through Europe and settled on the Rhine, under their eponymous king Francio.⁴² Nothing is said in book III about the conflict with Rome; after having

31 Fredegar: II,4; III,2.

32 Fredegar: II,4; III,2.

33 Fredegar: II,4–5; III,2.

34 Fredegar: II,5: “per quem Franci vocantur”.

35 Fredegar: II,5: “[Francio] multo tempore cum plurimis gentibus pugnam gerens, partem Asiae vastans, in Europam dirigens, inter Renum vel Danuvium et mare consedit” (“doing battle for a long time against many peoples and laying waste to a part of Asia, [Francio] led [them] to Europe and settled between the Rhine, the Danube and the sea”).

36 Fredegar: II,6.

37 Fredegar: II,6.

38 “After this no people has been able to conquer the Franks up to the present day” (Fredegar: II,6).

39 Fredegar: II,6; III,2.

40 Coumert (2007): 311–16; Ewig (1998): 7–8; 27–8.

41 Coumert (2007): 311–16; on the context, see more generally Ewig (1983). The Turks, Phrygians, and other peoples mentioned by Fredegar as cognate with the Franks in their Trojan origins, have recently been given a thorough examination by Gerald Krutzler: Krutzler (2013): 491–7.

42 Fredegar: III,2.

brought the Franks to the Rhine, Fredegar tells us that they began, but did not complete, the work of building a city in the image of Troy.⁴³ Following Gregory, in book III, Fredegar mentions the names of Marcomer and Sunno, whom he too calls “duces”.⁴⁴ He also provides an original narrative with regard to the origins of the Merovingian dynasty, telling us that their eponymous founder Merovech was born to Chlodio’s wife after her encounter with a sea-creature, and it is uncertain whether he was sired by the beast or a man.⁴⁵ Like the *LHF*, he also has a fair amount of legendary material surrounding Clovis and the early historically-attested Merovingian kings in book III; his treatment of Clovis’s conversion is based on Gregory, but abbreviates the latter far more than does the *LHF*.⁴⁶

Unlike both Fredegar and Gregory, the *LHF* is clearly focused on the Franks from its first sentence: “Principium regum Francorum eorumque origine [*sic*] vel gentium illarum ac gesta proferamus”.⁴⁷ The very next sentence takes us to Troy, ruled by Aeneas; the Trojans are praised as great warriors, but they are

43 Fredegar: III,2: “civitatem ad instar Trogiae nominis aedificare conati sunt. Ceptum quidem, sed imperfectum opus remansit” (“they tried to build a city in the likeness of the name of Troy. The work was begun, but it remained incomplete”). The reference is most likely to the city later known as Xanten, originally Colonia Ulpia Traiana; it is not difficult to see how a change from Traiana to Troiana might have taken place, and in fact the Ravenna Cosmographer, citing a report from c.500, also refers to a city on the Rhine as Troy (Schnetz and Zumschlinge, eds 1990: IV,24), a reference that has been taken to indicate the same city mentioned by Fredegar (cf. Coumert 2007: 286–7; 322–3; Ewig 1998, 13–14; Fischer 2014: 436–7; Giardina 1998, 197–9).

44 Fredegar: III,3; cf. *DLH*: II,9. Claudian, in the early fifth century, identifies them as kings (Platnauer, ed. and trans, 1922: I,246–56).

45 Fredegar: III,9: “aut a bisteia aut a viro fuisset concepta, peperit filium nomen Meroveum” (“whether impregnated by beast or man, she bore a son with the name of Merovech”). On the significance of this story, see the definitive account in Murray (1998), which demolishes effectively earlier claims that some notion of sacral kingship was implied. Murray believes that while in its origins, the story might have had positive connotations, in its context in Fredegar, it is possibly intended to shed a negative light on the Merovingians; this view is followed by Coumert (2007): 320–1; Plassmann (2006): 157; and Wood (2003a): 150–2; cf. Wood (2003a): 150–5, on the question of sacral kingship, on which he is somewhat vague. For a critical analysis of ancient sources on ‘Germanic’ sacral kingship, see also Picard (1991). Ewig (2006): 77–9, is too reliant on older views that have little evidentiary basis.

46 Fredegar: III,21.

47 *LHF*: I: “Let us relate the beginning of the kings of the Franks and their origin and deeds and [the origin and deeds] of those peoples”. It is not clear what is meant by “those peoples”; perhaps the phrase is an acknowledgement of the diverse peoples that make up the Frankish polity.

defeated in battle by the Greeks, following which Aeneas (called a “tyrannus”) flees to Italy. Priam and Antenor, who are simply called other Trojan rulers,⁴⁸ and whose relationship to Aeneas is not specified, move off with 12,000 of the army in boats, and make their way to Pannonia, where they begin to build a city, which they call Sicambria.⁴⁹ This city they inhabit for many years, and grow into a “magna gens”. At this same time the Alans, fleeing the Romans under the emperor Valentinian, escape to the Maeotis; Valentinian promises that whoever can flush the Alans out will not have to pay tribute for ten years,⁵⁰ and the Trojans successfully defeat the Alans. Then Valentinian gives them the name ‘Frank’; the *LHF* author explains this by saying that it means ‘wild’ in Greek.⁵¹ Ten years later, when it is time for them to pay tribute again, they (now and henceforth called Franks) refuse, and rise up against the imperial “dux” who attempts to collect the tribute.⁵² Enraged by this, Valentinian wages war against them; the Franks realise that they cannot hold out against him, and having lost Priam in battle, they flee Sicambria and settle along the Rhine, where they are ruled by the “principes” Marcomer and Sunno, sons of Priam and Antenor; after the death of Sunno, they wish to have just one king like other peoples, and following Marcomer’s advice, they elect Faramund, his son.⁵³

Up to this point, the narrative is original, though overlapping with Fredegar’s in many respects; the next chapter is based on Gregory (though with some significant interpolations), and tells us about the move across the Rhine under Chlodio, to whose line Merovech, the father of the historically-attested Childeric, belongs (the *LHF* knows nothing of the watery origins of Merovech as reported by Fredegar). In the following chapters too, the narrative follows that of Gregory closely. We are told of the reigns of Childeric and Clovis, and

48 *LHF*: 1: “alii quoque ex principibus” (“and others among the rulers”).

49 The name doubtless arose from the antiquarian linking of the ancient ‘Sigambri’ with the later Franks; the ‘Sigambri’ in fact also served as a Roman cohort in Pannonia, and there is some, albeit rather dubious, evidence that there may have been a city called Sigambria near modern Budapest (on which see Gerberding 1987: 20–2).

50 *LHF*: 2: “concedam eis tributa donaria annis decim” (“I shall grant to them the payments due for ten years”).

51 *LHF*: 2: “Tunc appellavit eos Valentinianus imperator Francos Attica lingua, hoc est feros, a duritia vel audacia cordis eorum” (“Then the emperor Valentinian called them ‘Franks’ in the Attic language, that is ‘wild ones’, because of the toughness and boldness of their heart”).

52 *LHF*: 3.

53 *LHF*: 4.

also that the Franks are pagans.⁵⁴ We also get a number of narratives regarding the marriage of Clovis that are either not in Gregory, or not reported by him in such embellished form.⁵⁵ Clovis's conversion is presented in Gregory's words, though of course Gregory had not included any of the prehistory we receive in the *LHF*.⁵⁶ The narrative now follows Gregory very closely, though once again with the insertion of brief, apparently legendary accounts not in Gregory's text. Unlike Fredegar and Gregory, the *LHF* has a very clearly political focus on the Franks, not turning aside from them for religious history, or tales of other peoples.

While Fredegar has, in essence, the same origin story as that in the *LHF*, in that he also tells us that fleeing Trojans moved along the Danube, spent some time in Pannonia, ended up on the flanks of the Rhine, and were eventually called Franks, there are nonetheless a number of differences in detail.⁵⁷ To begin with, while the *LHF*'s geography seems to be somewhat more clear,⁵⁸ its chronology, with respect to the relation of the fall of Troy and the Roman Empire, is more confused. Little time elapses between the fall of Troy (whence Priam and Antenor flee) and the reign of Valentinian (when their sons rule); given that the only emperors with this name ruled in the fourth and fifth centuries, this places the fall of Troy sometime between the late third and the fifth century.⁵⁹ In contrast, Fredegar places the kingdom and fall of Troy in a distant past, 300 years after the time of Moses. He also provides much more time between the fall of Troy and the eventual rise of the Merovingians, with a number of stages in between that are not included in the *LHF*. It is clear that the Franks in the *LHF* are expected to pay tribute to the Romans, though it is not apparent for how long this has been the case; in Fredegar, they only do so for a brief period under the rule of Pompey.

There is a significant shift in emphasis between Fredegar and the *LHF*: as noted above, Fredegar begins in the form of a universal chronicle, and even in his narrative of Frankish origins, the Franks are related not just to the Trojans, but also to the Phrygians, Macedonians, and Turks. This connection with peoples of great repute of the ancient world (and in contemporary Byzantium) is

54 *LHF*: 6; 10; cf. *DLH*: 11,10.

55 *LHF*: 11–13.

56 *LHF*: 15.

57 The versions of the Trojan origin story are helpfully tabulated by Coumert (2007): 318 (Fredegar books II and III); 331 (Fredegar and *LHF*).

58 The *LHF*-author seems to present a geography of eastern Europe that corresponds with what is found in other roughly contemporary eighth-century cosmographical works and early versions of the T-O maps (Gerberding 1987: 24–7).

59 Coumert (2007): 333.

presumably—as is the case with the Goths in Jordanes's *Getica*—to the greater glory of the Franks. This wider world of ancient peoples is completely alien to the worldview of the *LHF*, which is focused solely on a more exclusive version of Frankish history.⁶⁰ The *LHF* also differs from Fredegar in having a more ambivalent image of both Romans and Franks:⁶¹ while the former are still distinct from and enemies of the Franks, they also have the function of giving the Franks their name. The Franks, in their conflict with the Romans, do not come across in an entirely positive light either.⁶² There can be no question, however, that overall, the thrust of the work is pro-Frankish. While the original use of the Trojan myth was certainly to compare Franks and Romans, the *LHF* is, after the first few chapters, singularly uninterested in Romans, whereas much of Fredegar's history—cast in the form of a universal chronicle—continues to deal with Romans. This difference has led Gerberding to conclude that “the status of Romans *vis-à-vis* the Franks was not a central theme” in the *LHF*.⁶³ It is debatable to what extent it was a ‘central’ theme in Fredegar, but certainly Roman history and the Franks’ place within and emerging from this history are more important in the earlier work.

The Sources for the Trojan Myth

Although both texts cite Gregory extensively, it is apparent from the insertions of these origin narratives, for which Gregory has no parallels, that Fredegar and the *LHF* share a concern to highlight the distant—and Trojan—past of the Franks, which Gregory was either unaware of or uninterested in. Gregory names his sources for early Frankish history: the historians Sulpicius Alexander and Renatus Profuturus Frigeridus;⁶⁴ but the Pannonian origin that he narrates clearly derives from other sources (we should note, though, that a phrase like “tradunt multi” does not necessarily indicate oral informants). With Fredegar and the *LHF*, we have even less knowledge of the authors’ sources for the narratives of Trojan origins; the only earlier extant written source for Frankish history

60 Coumert (2007): 306–7; 311; 322–3; 338–9; Gerberding (1987): 17–19; 166–9; Plassmann (2006): 151; 189–90.

61 Plassmann (2006): 181; 186; 190.

62 *LHF*: 3: the Franks, rising up against Valentinian, are called “crudeles et inmanissimi”; “durtitia” and “audacia” in *LHF*: 2 could also (but need not) have negative connotations, as indeed could “ferus”.

63 Gerberding (1987): 30; similarly Coumert (2007): 338–9.

64 *DLH*: 11,9. Little is known about these historians, and their works are no longer extant.

was Gregory, and his text—lacking any hint of a Trojan origin myth—was obviously judged to be insufficient.

The story of Roman Trojan origins, at least in Virgil's version, was well known in the early middle ages; other extant narratives also told of the fall of Troy and the fate of the survivors, many of whom wandered far and founded other kingdoms.⁶⁵ The Roman origin myth obviously served as a model (though not a direct source) for the Trojan origin of the Franks, but other traditions also play a part. As early as the second century BC, the Aedui in Gaul were considered (by the Romans) to be "fratres" and "consanguinei" of the Romans;⁶⁶ it is possible that they were thought of as descending from Troy, though that is by no

65 For an overview of narratives of Troy and Roman Trojan origins in the seventh century, see Coumert (2007): 268–79. On references to Virgil in Fredegar and the knowledge of Virgil among his contemporaries, see Fischer (2014): 434–6; 440–2. Eugen Ewig has suggested that the narrative in Fredegar derives not from the *Aeneid*, but from the Nostoi of the Greek Epic Cycle; he cites, however, only the *Ethnica* of Stephanos Byzantios, who wrote in the mid-sixth century, and who states that a third Ilium was founded in Macedonia by Priam's son Helenos (Ewig 1998: 5–6). In fact, there is no connection in the extant material of the Epic Cycle between Trojans and Macedonia; the earliest link is made by Theopompus (4th century BC), according to whom Olympias, Alexander's mother, claimed descent from both Neoptolemos (the son of Achilles) and Helenos (The relevant passage is cited at Malkin 1998: 139; on Theopompus, see also Bruce 1970). Irad Malkin points out, though, that it was a common motif in the Nostoi to have heroes sailing west, and Helenos is mentioned as doing so elsewhere (1998: 193–4) (I am grateful to Jonathan Burgess for the reference and for clarification regarding the Nostoi). Fredegar certainly seems to have been interested in and had access to some Greek material (Borchert 2005: 447–8; Collins 2007: 51–2), and he might have been aware of Greek accounts of the Phrygians or of Macedonian origins in Troy. I am not aware of any earlier Latin texts that record such a narrative; many do, however, call Phrygians Trojans, without making the further link either with Franks or Macedonians (Cournert 2007: 305–6; Gerberding 1987: 23). As Cournert points out, the way in which Fredegar has the Trojans repeatedly change their name seems to follow a method found in Isidore, who says that the Trojans were earlier called Dardans after their king Dardanus, and became Trojans because they had a king calls Tros (Cournert 2007: 305; cf. *Etym.*: ix.ii.67). It is possible, as Cournert suggests (2007: 308), that Fredegar based the Phrygian–Macedonian connection on Jerome's chronicle, where the Phrygians are called "Maeones" (PL 27: *Anno ab Abr.* 654), which could easily enough be altered to "Macedones".

66 In the *Gallic War* Caesar mentions that the Senate calls them "fratres" and "consanguinei" (Hering, ed. 1987: i.xxxiii,2). Other references to them that use these terms are in Cicero, *Ad Atticum* (Shackleton Bailey, ed. 1987: i.xix,2) and *Ad familiares* (Shackleton Bailey, ed. 1988a: vii.x,4); Tacitus, *Annales* (Heubner, ed. 1983: xi.xxv,1); and much later again in the panegyrics on Constantius Chlorus from 297 (*Pan. lat.*: v[viii].ii,4; v[viii].iii,1; v[viii].iv,3; *Pan. lat.*: viii[v].xxi,2).

means certain from the references we have. The Arvernians, however, were ascribed a Trojan origin in the first century by Lucan, and Sidonius is aware of this origin in the fifth century.⁶⁷ Jonathan Barlow has suggested that Trojan refugees were thought to have some association with the Rhineland, where the Franks eventually settled, and he believes that the Trojan origin attached to the Franks during the fourth century, when many Franks from the Rhineland were recruited into the Roman army.⁶⁸ There is, however, no actual evidence for a Trojan myth connected specifically to the Franks before Fredegar, and as Alexander Murray has demonstrated, Barlow's reading of his texts as linking Trojans with the Rhineland depends on a shaky interpretation of Virgil and Ammianus.⁶⁹ It is reasonable to assume that the Frankish myth of Trojan origins was influenced in some way by the traditions regarding Gallic peoples,⁷⁰ though it is far from clear in what manner such a myth would have got transferred from the inhabitants of Gaul to the Franks.⁷¹ Given the differences

67 Shackleton Bailey (ed. 1988b): 1,427–8 (Lucan); Anderson (ed. and trans. 1930–65): *Ep.* VII. vii,2 (Sidonius). The material on Gallic Trojan origins or consanguinity with the Romans is surveyed most recently in Coumert (2007): 279–81, building on Barlow (1995): 89–90; Ewig (1998): 1–2; 23–4; and Giardina (1998): 200–2. I do not follow Coumert's view that since Gregory compares the Arvernians to Trojans with his citation of Virgil (*DLH*: IV,30), he must have known of an Arvernian Trojan myth; it is certainly likely that he did, but that likelihood arises not because of this reference but because he was himself Arvernian. He betrays in his writings no explicit evidence of any such knowledge.

68 Barlow (1995): 88–90.

69 Barlow's argument has two components: first, the fact that Virgil, in his *Aeneid*, refers to both the Tiber and the Rhine as horned rivers (*Aeneid*: VIII,77: "corniger fluuius"; VIII,727: "Rhenusque bicornis"), and that there are coins minted along the Rhine with the legend "expectate veni", which occurs in the *Aeneid* when the Tiber addresses Aeneas (*Aeneid*: VIII,36–65); this is interpreted as addressing, in the coins, the Franks who were recruited into the Roman army; second, Barlow cites Ammianus as stating that Trojan exiles settled across the Rhine (Ammianus: xv.ix,5: "aiunt quidam paucos post excidium Troiae fugitantes Graecos ubique dispersos loca haec occupasse tunc vacua": "some say that a few Greeks, fleeing after the fall of Troy and widely dispersed, occupied these places that were then empty"). The Virgilian references really cannot be loaded with as much meaning as Barlow would like; in the Ammianus passage, the words "loca haec" refer to various regions of Gaul, the subject of the previous sentences, rather than specifically the area around the Rhine. I follow here Murray (2002): 65, n. 93.

70 Cf. however Giardina (1998): 202–3.

71 Wood, citing Ammianus in support, claims that "it is likely that the Franks, like the Burgundians, received the epithet 'Trojan' within the context of imperial diplomacy", but there is no evidence that either people were called Trojan at this point (late fourth century). The passage of Ammianus cited by Wood with regard to the Burgundians (Ammianus: XXVIII.v,11) says only that the latter are "suboles" of the Romans; while this

between Fredegar and the *LHF*, moreover, it seems most likely that there were different versions of the Trojan origin myth in circulation by the second half of the seventh century, and Fredegar and the *LHF* drew on independent versions of the story.

While the Trojan aspects of the narrative do not appear in the context of Frankish history before Fredegar, other elements seem to derive from traditions extant in the sixth century and possibly earlier. The naming of the Franks after an eponymous king is mentioned by the Greek writer John Lydus in the mid-sixth century, and Isidore of Seville also says that the Franks may have got their name from one of their leaders.⁷² Similarly, the reference to the “attica lingua” in which ‘Frank’ means fierce might be related to Libanios’s (fourth-century) statement that the Franks are so-called from the Greek “φράκτοι”;⁷³ note that Libanios knew some Frankish military commanders personally.⁷⁴ Although the Greek word means ‘armoured’, rather than ‘fierce’, a slip in a Latin translation or transcription could easily have produced a change from ‘ferreus’ to ‘ferus’.⁷⁵ The name Sicamber occurs from the first century BC onwards, referring to people on the Rhine frontier; from the end of the fourth century, it seems to be used consistently to signify the Franks.⁷⁶ The migration from Pannonia is contained even in Gregory, though not, of course, the travels that precede this (which should caution us from over-hasty assumptions that Gregory knew of a Frankish Trojan origin myth). In addition, of the ancient kings mentioned, while there are no sources attesting to Priam, Antenor or Faramund among the Franks, Marcomer and Sunno are recorded as Frankish

“could mean that they were thought of as Trojans” (Wood 1994b: 34), there is no compelling reason to construe it thus (cf. Wood 1995: 51–2, where he expresses himself somewhat more cautiously). See also Giardina (1998): 203–5; 207–8, who argues convincingly that there is no warrant to suppose that late imperial diplomacy made use of any kind of Trojan affiliation; the rhetoric of consanguinity seems to have been an earlier feature of Roman foreign relations with regard to the Gauls. Coumert postulates, plausibly, that the Trojan origin myth’s transference to the Franks is evidence of the use of Gallo-Roman culture by the learned in service of the Franks (Coumert 2007: 379); but she (probably quite sensibly) makes no suggestions as to how exactly such a transfer took place.

72 Bandy (ed. and trans. 1983): III,56 (John Lydus); *Etym.*: IX.ii,101 (Isidore); on these sources, cf. the varying perspectives in Barlow (1995): 92; Coumert (2007): 291–3; Ewig (1998): 9; Ewig (2001): 46; Gerberding (1987): 23–4.

73 Foerster (ed. 1907): LIX,127–35; Dodgeon (trans. 1996): 194–6.

74 Ewig (1998): 20–1; Ewig (2001): 47; similarly already Gerberding (1987): 24, with reference to earlier scholarship.

75 Ewig (1998): 20–1.

76 Coumert (2007): 282–3; Gerberding (1987): 20–2.

kings in Claudian's early-fifth-century panegyric on Stilicho, and Gregory too mentions them (citing Sulpicius Alexander), albeit as "duces".⁷⁷

None of the sources mentioned above provide anything like the narratives in the *LHF* and Fredegar, only fragments from which such stories could plausibly be constructed—with the help of some imagination or additional material no longer accessible to us. It is also difficult to know how most of these sources could have been accessed by the Frankish writers; in particular, there is no evidence that the *LHF*-author had access to any Greek material. The Trojan origin myth as we have it in Fredegar and the *LHF* must therefore be understood as not having been derived from any (single) ancient source.⁷⁸ Furthermore, on the basis of the extant evidence, there is no reason to believe that there was a coherent Trojan origin myth for the Franks extant before the seventh century.⁷⁹

There is no warrant for believing in the existence of any ancient tradition (oral or written) that suggests a Trojan origin for the Franks, and is the source for Fredegar. The extensive research on this problem has found nothing more than some segments (but not all) of what occurs in Fredegar also extant in some form in extremely diverse earlier sources; the whole narrative of Trojan origin does not occur anywhere before Fredegar, so there is no compelling reason to believe that it was known as a coherent narrative a century earlier. Like the Gothic origin narrative presented by Jordanes that is based primarily on written narratives of other peoples, it is certain that the Frankish origin myth derives from written narratives relating to exiled Trojans, with narratives of

77 Platnauer (ed. and trans. 1922): I,246–56; *DLH*: II,9; on these passages, see Coumert (2007): 290; Gerberding (1987): 20.

78 Barlow (1995); Coumert (2007): 337; Ewig (1998).

79 Cf. Coumert (2007): 286–8; 291, *contra* Barlow (1995), Ewig (1998), and Ewig (2001). Ewig's view (Ewig 1998: 14)—that since the Ravenna Cosmographer refers to a source from c.500 that knows of a 'Troy' on the Rhine, the Trojan origin of the Franks was known at the time—is not convincing: a Troy on the Rhine need not be Frankish (the city of Colonia Ulpia Traiana was Roman); and even if it were, it need not mean the Franks had (or were already by this point believed to have had) Trojan origins (similarly Coumert 2007: 288). Giardina suggests that the Franks did indeed preserve a tradition of having founded a city somewhere on their migration, but that this was Sicambria, not a new Troy (Giardina 1998: 197–9); I find this equally implausible, and there is no real evidence to support such a view. The arguments put forth by Barlow and Ewig—that since there were references to Trojans in Gaul and on the Rhine; since the derivation of the name 'Frank' was known in the sixth century; and since Gregory knew of the story of a Pannonian origin, there must therefore have been in the sixth century a composite narrative with *all* these elements, as in Fredegar—are completely speculative, though they cannot be disproved.

Roman origins being most probably the most significant model. The Frankish origin narrative as we have it is also almost certainly a creation from the period after the Franks succeeded the Romans in Gaul, and probably dates no further back than the seventh century. It seems most likely that regardless of what might have existed in whatever oral tradition that might have been cultivated by the Franks before their adoption of Latin and literacy, after the establishment of the Frankish kingdom in Gaul, no sufficiently coherent or suitably impressive origin narrative of the Franks survived, and one had to be put together from sources dealing with other peoples.⁸⁰

Nevertheless, the existence of different versions of the origin myth, and the fact that isolated elements in it are extant from before Fredegar, although the origin myth itself is unknown to any earlier source, suggest that though the narrative in its different forms originated in a reading of and compilation from diverse written material, by the time of Fredegar, and certainly by the time of the *LHF*, some sort of story of a Trojan past was more widely circulated than either of these texts.⁸¹ Moreover, from the nature of the early references to Trojans in Gaul and to the naming of the Franks, it seems likely that these written sources were themselves partly based on oral speculation or reports of some sort, and in turn influenced such informal oral material.⁸² Given that we do not have any extant written source that could have been a popular repository of the tale, it seems more than likely that the myth of Trojan origins, first created out of a reading of Roman history, entered into the popular elite imagination, and therefore circulated not just in the various written versions that are extant, but also in some oral form (not necessarily as a coherent narrative, but perhaps only as isolated references such as those extant in the earlier written sources regarding the Arvernians).⁸³ Although the story as we encounter it in Fredegar and the *LHF* is undoubtedly ultimately derived from written narratives regarding the Trojans, given the diversity of such tales, it seems possible that whoever came up with the Frankish myth in the first place did so on the basis of written narratives about the Roman Trojan past, combined with some kind of *topoi* present in aristocratic Frankish/Gallic circles concerning the origin of the name 'Frank', or the Trojan link with Gaul, which need not have been written.

Whatever form these stories took, though, they were clearly developments of relatively recent history rather than ancient Frankish tradition, and were

80 Coumert (2007): 322–3; 334–5.

81 Barlow (1995); Coumert (2007): 337–8; Ewig (1998).

82 Giardina (1998): 177–8; 206.

83 This view is supported by the many later references to such origins: cf. Coumert (2007): 341–63, for a survey.

transformations and interpretations of the various written sources for the history of Troy and its relation to Rome, which provided a model for the narrative.⁸⁴ Unlike the model of the Trojan origin and migration from Troy, the material regarding Troy and Gaul and the naming of the Franks is likely to have entered the narrative in a more amorphous form, as the vague early written references that we have probably draw on some sort of aristocratic speculations, and seem unlikely to have been used in their extant written form by Fredegar or the *LHF*-author or their immediate sources.⁸⁵ By the seventh century, someone seeking an origin for the Franks would have had a fairly broad range of material of diverse sorts from which the story as we have it could have been cobbled together, from Roman histories (including the *Aeneid*) to casual references to Trojans in Gaul or a new Troy along the Rhine. The variations in the story allow us to suggest that in this case, the written tradition of Roman Trojan origins influenced a sense of historical consciousness; this is therefore a case not of oral tradition being written down, but of written material forming the basis of a sense of the past that then enters a discourse beyond that solely of written texts.⁸⁶

The Function of the Frankish Distant Past

Rome remained, throughout the early middle ages, an important source of inspiration: it was the fount of religion, of educated culture, of political rhetoric,

84 Coumert (2007): 334–5.

85 Similarly Coumert (2007): 378–80, who, while believing that the origins of this myth were in scholarly efforts to recast the past for contemporary purposes, also suggests that the story would have been passed on in informal oral exchanges, and that Paul the Deacon (for example), who mentions the Trojan origins of the Franks (see Chapter 4), is likely to have heard the narrative in the course of conversations at court.

86 I am assuming a pattern of development roughly as follows: (i) written texts about Rome and Troy providing a model for a narrative of Trojan origins (Rome and its history were still an essential part of the schooling of Latin writers, which is why I believe the origins of Rome would have been more influential than other any peoples' potential Trojan origins); (ii) other written texts about Troy also providing a model, both for direct references in Fredegar to Trojan Macedonians, and for a notion that not just Romans, but also other people could have Trojan origins; (iii) oral and written speculation on the basis of these models about Frankish Trojan origins, which were in turn nourished by (iv) oral and written speculation about possible relationships between Frankish Trojan origins and both references to the relationship between Aedui or Arverni and Rome or Troy, and early explanations regarding the origins of the name of the Franks.

of the language and medium of law, religion, and administration.⁸⁷ Asserting that the past of the Franks was comparable to the past of the Romans, therefore, must certainly have been a method of glorifying the Frankish past.⁸⁸ But it is important to note that the Frankish narratives do not attempt to show the Franks as being or becoming 'Roman' because of their origins; they are, in fact, clearly distinguished from the Romans in both texts, and are equally clearly enemies of the Romans for the periods recorded in both texts.⁸⁹ Rome is, moreover, somewhat diminished in comparison to the Franks—though not by ever being completely defeated and thus removed from Gaul, but primarily because it simply disappears from view.

In the *LHF*, Aeneas, called a "tyrannus", is never actually said to found Rome; we are only told that he fled to Italy.⁹⁰ Any cognate relationship between Franks and Romans is never explicitly stressed in the text,⁹¹ and the Franks are clearly seen as different from the Romans. It would seem obvious that asserting a Trojan origin has the purpose of glorifying Frankish origins, and Trojan origins were presumably worth having precisely because the Romans claimed a Trojan past.⁹² But it is nevertheless the link with Troy, and not the link with Rome, that serves the purposes of glorifying Frankish history: the similarity to the Romans is important; the relationship that the common origin establishes is less so.

87 Of the vast scholarship on the significance of Rome in the early middle ages, see for example Heather (2013); Riché (1995): 153–201; Julia Smith (2005): 28–31; 255–92; Wickham (2009): 200–1; 561–2.

88 Coumert (2007): 306–7; 311; 322; Neville (2001): 108–9.

89 McKitterick (2004a): 386–7; Plassmann (2006): 154–5; 180–2. In this regard also, these two texts seem to differ from Gregory, who appears not to place much value on specifically ethnic, but rather on political, and above all religious affiliation; it has been suggested that because of his interest in stressing religious and political unity, he tried to dissolve the difference between Romans and Franks within the Frankish kingdom (Goetz 2004: 551–7; Goffart 1988, 212–13; James 1998; see also Heinzelmänn 1994a). Note also that even in Fredegar and the *LHF*, Frankishness as a form of specifically ethnic or cultural identity seems not to be especially important: the term indicates a polity, which it is important to distinguish from Rome, and also, equally, from other polities (on these issues, see Goetz 2003: 322–44; Goetz 2004: 557–65).

90 *LHF*: 1.

91 Plassmann (2006): 181.

92 While I would agree that equating Romans with Franks was not the "central theme" of the *LHF* (Gerberding 1987: 30), the fact remains that a Trojan origin myth begins this text; the equation with the Romans was important enough not just to be included, but also to be the point of entry into the narrative.

The same is true also for Fredegar. Although we are told in the Fredegar chronicle that Frigas and Aeneas were brothers,⁹³ any further relationship between the Franks and the Romans is not mentioned. In fact, after their brief subjugation to Pompey, we are told that the Franks were never conquered by anyone; their freedom and valour is compared not to that of the Romans, but the Macedonians: “Ad ipsum instar et Macedonis, qui ex eadem generatione fuerunt”.⁹⁴ Notably, the only time we hear of Franks being subjugated in any manner in either text, it is by Romans,⁹⁵ and in both texts the Franks free themselves from Roman domination. One could interpret this as being intended to show the Franks passing the ultimate test, as it were, of being able to assert their freedom against the Romans.⁹⁶ In the *LHF*, although the Franks do receive their name from a Roman emperor, the Romans are nevertheless clearly their enemies for much of their distant history.⁹⁷ In neither text do we get a sense (as in Isidore’s history) of the Romans being conquered by the Franks in the latter’s effort to found their kingdom; the Romans seem to fade from the history of Gaul, rather than being driven out of it. The authors of these two texts do not, therefore, betray a clearly antagonistic attitude towards the Romans, as does, for instance, Isidore.⁹⁸

Like the narratives of ancient Gothic history, the myth of Frankish Trojan origins serves the purpose of defining the past of the people concerned, and of casting them in a positive light by relating them to and simultaneously setting them apart from the Romans. The significant difference is, of course, that by providing the Trojan origin, consanguinity between Romans and Franks is established, making the Franks literally more akin to the Romans than were the Goths in either of the Gothic histories discussed above; this also distinguishes the Franks more clearly from the various other barbarian peoples that they came into contact with, many of whom are mentioned in

93 Fredegar: II,8.

94 “The Macedonians, who had the same origins, were of the same mould” (Fredegar: II,6); see also Giardina (1998): 185.

95 Fredegar: II,6; *LHF*: 3 (Franks as tributaries of Romans).

96 Ewig (2001): 44–5.

97 The *LHF*-author nevertheless seems to have a more positive attitude to the Romans, something manifest not so much by how they are depicted, but by his critical attitude to the Franks when they revolt (*LHF*: 3). One could interpret this, though, as a respect for legitimate authority (here represented by the Romans) rather than a belief in the goodness of Roman domination or the inferiority of the Franks.

98 The reason for this difference is probably straightforward enough: Isidore worked within a context of relatively recent military conflict between the Visigoths and the Romans, whereas neither Fredegar nor the *LHF*-author wrote against such a background.

the histories discussed here.⁹⁹ The Franks are shown to have a history very similar to that of the Romans, thus making them more easily comparable; they are also shown to have a history that is distinct from that of the Romans, and since they have been able, in both texts, to maintain their freedom, this establishes them as praiseworthy even in comparison to Rome. We saw earlier that while for Jordanes, the Goths complement Rome, but must remain subservient, for Isidore the Goths succeed Rome, not least by defeating Romans. In the case of Fredegar and the *LHF*, the Franks and Romans are like siblings, of whom one ultimately survives, and rules; the other is not actually conquered, but simply vanishes from the authors' line of sight. There is no sense of complementarity, but also less stress on direct conflict. While the project of Jordanes was to show the convergence of Gothic and Roman history, the Trojan myth of the Franks shows that Franks and Romans had parallel, but also discrete pasts.¹⁰⁰

The important point in this regard is, however, not just the appropriation of the Roman origin myth as a means of raising the Franks to being parallel with the Romans. At a time in their history when the Franks had established a strong, independent kingdom, and there was no dependence on, and little actual threat posed by Rome, it was still felt appropriate to provide the Franks with a history directly parallel to that of the Romans: Rome remained the ideal against which others were to be measured.¹⁰¹ There was no myth of any Scandinavian origin of the Franks extant at this point (though Fredegar certainly knew of the possibility of Scandinavian origins of barbarian peoples: see his narration of the Lombard origin story, discussed in the following chapter); the distant past of a people that the Romans had thought of as barbarian was now conceived of in terms completely analogous to the distant past of the Romans themselves. This shows, I believe, that while a distinction between Roman and Frank was certainly still held to be very important, there was no sense of a specifically barbarian–Roman dichotomy applying to the Franks, at least not in these texts. Nor, however, was there any sense of a need to show the Franks becoming more explicitly Roman in any way—whether politically, as in

99 Cf. Plassmann (2006): 171, who argues that the Trojan origin myth makes the Franks seem superior to other non-Roman peoples of western Europe, and also conferred on them a legitimacy for their rule in a formerly Roman province. See further Krutzler (2013) for a detailed examination of the depiction of various non-Frankish people in Gregory, Fredegar, and the *LHF*.

100 Giardina (1998): 192.

101 On the wider significance of Rome and Roman-ness in Fredegar, see also Fischer (2014), and his forthcoming monograph.

the *Getica*, in which they are subsumed within the empire, or in terms of culture, as in Isidore's Gothic history.

These considerations will need to borne in mind when we go on to examine the nature of vernacular and oral cultures during the ninth century in Frankish Europe: during this period, the Franks also acquired a Scandinavian past, and apparently also an awareness of a linguistic kinship with other Germanic-speaking peoples.¹⁰² But given that the *LHF* and Fredegar continued to be copied, it would be inappropriate to think that there was, or had earlier been, some sense of distinction, as a barbarian or a Germanic people, that brought the Franks closer to the Goths or Lombards or Saxons than to the Romans. It would be equally incorrect to think of references to or recordings of vernacular traditions in the Carolingian period (from within Frankish territory) dealing with kings of the fourth to the sixth centuries as necessarily indicative of an interest in a specifically—and consciously thus acknowledged—Germanic or barbarian past, with a value somehow opposed to that of the Roman past.¹⁰³ This is especially the case when we consider the legends regarding the Ostrogothic king Theoderic—stories that might have been valued among the Franks not because he was a great 'Germanic' hero, but because he was, according to Fredegar, a great Macedonian king, and thus cognate with the Franks.¹⁰⁴ The examination of the Trojan origin of the Franks shows, therefore, that at least in the case of the Franks' sense of historical consciousness, the Roman–barbarian dichotomy breaks down spectacularly: in this case, the barbarian, non-Roman past is in fact a non-barbarian, and very Roman past.

102 Cf. Coumert (2007): 363–78 for a survey; and below, Chapter 7.

103 In this respect it is important to note with Coumert that the Scandinavian origins of the Franks are as based on a reading of texts as the Trojan myth, and not on any native oral tradition (Cournert 2007: 378–9).

104 Fredegar: II,56 (Theoderic's Macedonian origin); II,57 and II,59 (both on Theoderic's exploits); see further Chapter 7 below.

Paul the Deacon and the Ancient History of the Lombards

Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* (*HL*), written in the late eighth century, is the last of the Latin prose histories to be examined in this monograph. Like the Gothic history of Jordanes, this text also incorporates what appears to be some kind of oral material possibly deriving from vernacular narratives; but Paul treats his barbarian heritage with much less apparent embarrassment than any of the histories examined so far, and, insofar as his history provides what is in my view the first and most successful synthesis of barbarian and Roman inheritances within the scope of a 'national' history, it is an appropriate point to end the examination of this form of narrative. This chapter begins with an overview of the historical background regarding the Lombards and the other narrative sources for their earlier history, followed by a second introductory section surveying the life and works of Paul the Deacon, and providing a summary of the narrative of the *HL*. I then move on to a discussion of Paul's account of Lombard origins and some of his legendary stories, with a view to establishing the nature of any putative oral tradition on which he might have drawn to compose these narratives. Following my analysis of the legendary material, I examine Paul's treatment of religious and ethnic difference between Catholics and Arians or pagans, and between Romans and Lombards. I conclude with some remarks on the function of the distant past in Paul's history, and how it compares to the histories of the Goths and Franks examined above.

The Early History of the Lombards: Background and Sources

The earliest references to Lombards, from the first and second centuries AD, identify them as a people along the lower Elbe.¹ After this the Lombards do not

1 The early sources mention "Langobardi", normally as a sub-group of the Sueves: Strabo (Jones, ed. and trans 1917–33: VII.i.3); Velleius Paterculus (Watt, ed. 1988: II.cvi,2); Tacitus's *Germania* (Ogilvie and Winterbottom, eds. 1975: XL,1), and his *Annales* (Heubner, ed. 1983: II.xlv,1; XI.xvii,3); Ptolemy (Stückelberger and Graßhoff, ed. and trans. 2006: II.xi,9; 15; cf. also the "Λαγκοβαρδοί" mentioned at II.xi,17, identified, because of their location, by the editors as identical with the "Lugii" of Tacitus [Ogilvie and Winterbottom, eds. 1975: XLIII,2], though from the name given they might equally well be Lombards); Cassius Dio (Cary and Foster, ed.

impinge on Roman consciousness and appear to have had little direct contact with the empire—and are thus absent in written sources—until the middle of the sixth century, when Procopius informs us that the Lombards (whom he identifies as Christian) had been at the borders of the empire in the late fifth century, and were later given parts of Noricum by Justinian and fought with the Romans against the Goths.² It is difficult to construct a narrative history of the Lombards on the basis of contemporary sources until the end of the sixth century, far later than is the case for the Goths and the Franks.³

Although the Lombards appear to have had a less lengthy history of close contact with Rome by the time they set up an independent post-imperial kingdom than had the Goths and Franks before the establishment of their polities, if we can trust Procopius, the Lombards had occupied a Roman province for 40 years before moving into Italy in 568, and had had close contact with the empire for roughly a century; they appear to have had some familiarity already with both Christianity and some elements of Roman administrative culture.⁴

The *Liber Pontificalis* reports that the Lombards were invited by Narses to enter and settle in Italy in the aftermath of the Gothic wars.⁵ This information is repeated by a number of later sources, but its reliability, and the conditions of the settlement, are unclear. Whether or not there was an invitation, the Lombards did enter Italy; there certainly does not seem to have been any serious imperial effort to keep them out.⁶ A kingdom had been firmly established by 605, and was to last until the conquest of Lombard Italy by Charlemagne in 774; Italy remained, though, a region in which the empire

and trans. 1914–27: LXXI.iii,1). For discussion of these sources, see Christie (1995): 1–14; Coumert (2007): 145–6; Everett (2003): 54–5; Priester (2004): 13–21. Note that Velleius Paterculus might not understand the Lombards to be a ‘Germanic’ people, as the latter are less ferocious, in his view, than the Lombards.

2 Dewing (ed. and trans. 1914–28): VI.xiv,9–10; VII.xxxiii,10–12; VII.xxxiv,34; 40.

3 Surveys of Lombard history up to c.600 are given in Christie (1995): 14–68 (based on archaeology and Paul the Deacon), and Jarnut (1982): 9–26 (essentially a summary of Paul and the *OGL*). On the evidentiary basis for this early history, cf. Everett (2003): 55–6; Halsall (2007): 398–9; Priester (2004): 21–33; Wickham (1981): 28–30.

4 On these issues, see Christie (1995): 31–68; Everett (2003): 56–65; Jarnut (1982): 30–2; Wickham (1981): 29–30.

5 Duchesne (ed. and trans. 1886–92): LXIII,3–4.

6 For the later sources, see Everett (2003): 65–7. The *Liber Pontificalis* is the earliest text to record an invitation by Narses, but this section of the work was probably only compiled in the 620s (Davis, trans. 2000: xiii). On the early period of Lombard rule in Italy, see Christie (1995): 73–91; Jarnut (1982): 33–46; Priester (2004): 34–58; Wickham (1981): 30–4.

retained an interest, and parts of Italy remained under imperial rule for the whole of this period.⁷

The earliest extant substantial narrative of Lombard history is Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* (*HL*), written in the late eighth century, after the demise of the Lombard kingdom. There are extant also brief accounts of the origins of the Lombards in the Fredegar chronicle, and in a text known as the *Origo gentis Langobardorum* (*OGL*); the latter is considered a potentially important source for Paul's history.⁸

Paul the Deacon and his *Historia Langobardorum*

Paul was probably born in the 720s in Friuli, and appears to have been associated with the royal court at Pavia for much of his life. By the time of his first surviving work from 763 (a poem on the ages of the world), he was a deacon at Monte Cassino, where he remained until his death in the 790s. He remained close to the Lombard royal family, and after the fall of the kingdom to Charlemagne, the court of Benevento was patron for at least some of his literary production. Paul's brother had been imprisoned by Charlemagne, and Paul spent the years 781–5 at the Frankish court, initially at least in an effort to plead on his brother's behalf. Apart from his Lombard history, he also wrote a *Historia Romana*, a version of Eutropius's *Breviarum* which was updated to bring it up to the mid-sixth century; a history of the bishops of Metz; some poems; and editions of philosophical and theological works of other writers.⁹

7 For the political history of Lombard Italy, see Christie (1995): 91–108 (with special attention to material culture); Delogu (1995); Delogu (2009); Jarnut (1982); Priester (2004): 59–84; Wickham (1981): 31–47. On the culture of Lombard Italy, see Christie (1995): 183–205; Everett (2003): 84–99; Jarnut (1982): 125–33; Priester (2004): 92–196. On social and economic conditions, the best work remains Wickham (1981). On the nature of the initial settlement and the absorption of Roman norms within the Lombard kingdom, cf. Delogu (2004); Everett (2003): 61–79; 163–96; Goffart (1980): 176–205; Pohl (2001); Wickham (1981): 115–36; Wickham (2005): 115–20. On relations between the empire and the Lombards in the sixth century, see Pohl (1997).

8 On the *OGL* and Fredegar's account of Lombard history, as well as other sources between Procopius and the mid-seventh century, see Coumert (2007): 143–76; on the *OGL*, see most recently Borri (2014): 49–54; 58–69.

9 On Paul's biography and other works, see Bullough (1991): 98–100; Cornford (2006): 47–9; Coumert (2007): 215–16; Goffart (1988): 333–47; McKitterick (2004b): 66–70; Mortensen (1991): 73–6; Plassmann (2006): 191–200. Specifically on the *Gesta episcoporum Mettensium*, see Goffart (1986); see also Goffart (1988): 370–8 for a brief analysis of Paul's other works.

The *Romana* was written for the duchess Adalperga of Benevento; apart from adding six original books on Italian history from 368 onwards (when Eutropius's *Breviarum* ends), it also makes reference to Christian history even in the period dealt with by Eutropius, inserting material on Christ himself and on Peter and Paul. Extracts from Orosius are included, which, even if not explicitly Christian in content, help to lend Paul's work a more Christian view of historical progress.¹⁰ A notable feature of this text is the prominence given to invasions of Italy by various barbarian groups from the fifth century onwards; the history of the empire as such takes second place to the history specifically of Italy. The *Romana* also includes, in its latter parts, a number of narratives of papal history. Paul drew on a wide range of sources in compiling this text, and as a whole, the work is rather more original than Jordanes's *Romana*, and is an earlier example of the strong expression of authorial intention that we shall encounter more prominently in the *HL*.¹¹

It is not known for whom the *HL* was composed, but it seems likely that it, like the *Romana*, was intended for an audience of Lombard nobility, possibly at Benevento. Rosamond McKitterick has argued that the *HL* was written for a Frankish audience, and intended as a legitimization of Frankish rule in Italy, because Paul's concept of a good king is in her mind modelled on Charlemagne, and because of the widespread reception of his work in ninth-century Francia.¹² It seems to me that Paul's concept of a good king could equally have been derived from a reading of Bede or Gregory of Tours; and the fact that his work was copied in Francia does not mean it was written for a Frankish audience. Furthermore, as Magali Coumert points out, the *Historia Langobardorum codicis Gothani*, written in the first decade of the ninth century at the Frankish court, seems completely ignorant of Paul, which argues against his having

10 The relationship between Eutropius, Paul's other sources, and Paul's own additions, are visually laid out in Maskarinec (2013): 354–5; she also provides a detailed discussion of the significance of the stress on Christianity and its relationship to Rome in the *Romana* (Maskarinec 2013: 315–23).

11 On Paul's *Romana*, see Goffart (1988): 347–70; see also Maskarinec (2013) for further comparison of the *Romana* and the *HL*. Specifically on Paul's presentation of ethnic identities in the *Romana*, see Cornford (2006). On the manuscript contexts and reception of the *Romana*, see Kretschmer (2007). The sources used by Paul include Orosius, the chronicles of Jerome and Bede, both of Jordanes's histories, and Gregory the Great's dialogues.

12 McKitterick (2004b): 60–83. This argument is also accepted by Plassmann (2006): 239–42, who believes in addition that Paul was actively trying to downplay any identity-forming influences that might have existed in the Lombard traditions he reported, and would only have done so if he were writing in support of the Franks.

written specifically for a Frankish audience.¹³ Paul certainly does not come across as a panegyrist for the Lombard kings—unlike, for example, Isidore with relation to the Visigothic monarchs—but he does present a more positive image of the Lombards than he could have done, had his intention been solely to justify Frankish rule over them; there is too little in his text to support an unequivocal pro-Frankish reading. It must be conceded, though, that Paul's purpose and audience are far from easy to discern.¹⁴

The *HL* comprises six books of varied length, beginning with a geographical description of Scandinavia and the origins there of the Lombards, and ending with King Liutprand in the 740s. The work is not completely homogeneous in terms of style, with some sections, especially in the first two books, written almost in the manner of an epic narrative, and the second half of the text frequently adopting a very concise, annalistic style. Even in the early books, though, a number of chapters are brief accounts of political events; these are interspersed with longer, very detailed narratives of single incidents (for example, a wooing; a murder; an encounter between two kings).¹⁵ Paul's text also—unlike any of the other histories we have considered so far—includes verse, which is not strictly narrative in nature, and is apparently inserted for a heightening of tone appropriate to religious subjects.¹⁶ Paul thus appears to have used three registers of historical narration: a straightforward, often annalistic style for most events; a more epic or legendary style of prose (often including considerable alliteration) for legendary narratives; and verse for religious topics of special importance.

13 Coumert (2007): 219; see also Coumert (2007): 251–61, for a fuller discussion of this text.

14 Similarly Coumert (2007): 219.

15 Some randomly chosen examples: *HL*: 11,6 tells of the migration of 20,000 Saxon men to Italy and their replacement in their homeland by Sueves; *HL*: 11,26 narrates Alboin's conquest of all of northern Italy, and tells us that his contingent was multi-ethnic; *HL*: 111,3 tells the story of a war between Lombards, Franks, and Burgundians, in which the Lombards slaughter many Burgundians and take a huge booty. Despite the relatively large scale of events related, these chapters are all quite short, each less than half a printed page in the MGH edition. Contrasting examples are *HL*: 11,28, telling the story of Alboin's death by the plotting of his wife; *HL*: 111,12, which tells of a miraculous discovery of treasure at the imperial court; and *HL*: 111,30, which tells the story of Authari's journey to Bavaria and his betrothal to and interaction with his future wife. These passages relate single, small-scale events, but take up a good deal more space, include dialogue, and also contain some discussion of character and motivation. Some of these narratives will be discussed in detail below.

16 The verse passages are: *HL*: 1,26 (on Benedict of Nursia); *HL*: 11,13 (on St Martin); *HL*: 111,19 (on Droctulf); *HL*: VI,15 (on Ceodal/Cædwalla).

The first book, after describing northern Europe, Scandinavia, and the people who live there, tells us that the Lombards, initially called Winnili, left Scandinavia and started moving south.¹⁷ We are told how they get their later name of “Longobardi”,¹⁸ and of migrations under various kings until they reach Pannonia by the end of the book. At this point, they are ruled by Alboin, who has just killed the Gepid king Cunimund and married his daughter.¹⁹ Book II opens with Alboin providing support to Narses in Italy, and as a whole presents a narrative of the Lombard entry into and settlement within Italy under Alboin, as well as a geographical description of the land. The book ends with Alboin’s death by the plotting of his wife,²⁰ which is followed by a period of political chaos and disunity among the Lombards.²¹ Book III follows the history of the Lombard duchies in the late sixth century, and the interactions between the Lombards and their various neighbours (Bavarians, Franks, Saxons). As before, shorter chapters covering more or less lengthy processes are interspersed with detailed narratives of individual and relatively brief events, notably a miracle in Constantinople under Tiberius, Authari’s wooing of Theudelinda, and a story about an animal appearing from the Frankish king Guntram’s mouth.²² Book III ends with the death of Authari, and the marriage of his widow Theudelinda to Agilulf; both incidents are reported in some detail.²³ The early part of Book IV treats often of the Christian works of Theudelinda and cites her correspondence with pope Gregory; later parts of the book describe wars with Avars, and provide the story of how Paul’s ancestor Lopichis entered Italy,²⁴ in what seems to be some sort of remembered oral family history. It also tells us of the deeds of Rothari, the king who promulgated the first written Lombard laws,²⁵ and ends with the accession of Grimuald in 662. Book IV has 51 chapters; we reach Agilulf’s death (in 616) only in chapter 41, with the last ten chapters rushing through almost half a century. In comparison, books I,12 to IV,41 cover roughly 70 years. The greater part of book V is on the reign of Grimuald; by the end of the book, we have advanced

17 *HL*: I,1–6; I,7.

18 *HL*: I,8–9.

19 *HL*: I,27.

20 *HL*: II,28.

21 *HL*: II, 29–32.

22 *HL*: III,12 (miracle in Constantinople); *HL*: III,30 (Authari and Theudelinda); *HL*: III,24 (Guntram).

23 *HL*: III,34–5.

24 *HL*: IV,37.

25 *HL*: IV,42.

another 50 years to the beginning of the seventh century, of which roughly the first half is dealt with in the sixth and final book, in which the reign of Liutprand is related in some detail.

We see that Paul expends a considerable amount of space on the earliest period of Lombard history, just before the Lombards entered Italy and the first decades of their rule there; after the reign of Agilulf (the first Catholic Lombard king, though Paul is not explicit in stating this), things move along much faster. While individual kings (principally Grimoald and Liutprand) receive a good deal of attention, Paul seems to have been more interested in (or better informed about), both the distant past, and the very recent past (the reign of Liutprand) that encompassed his own infancy and childhood, than in most of the seventh century. Perhaps unsurprisingly, there is also more legendary matter in the sections on the Lombards up to the reign of Agilulf, with narratives such as those of Alboin and Turisind and Alboin's death, or Authari's wooing of Theudelinda, all of which appear to be more concerned with characters and colourful stories than with a relatively dry political history, which dominates books v and vi.²⁶

Lombard Oral Tradition in the *Historia Langobardorum*

The Lombards and Scandinavia

Like Jordanes, Paul the Deacon has often been seen as a bearer of an ancient oral tradition, and as is the case with Jordanes, although we can identify the provenance of much of Paul's material, there are no known sources for significant portions of his narrative.²⁷ Paul gives the Lombards a Scandinavian origin,

26 *HL*: 1,24 (Alboin and Turisind); *HL*: 11,28 (Alboin's death); *HL*: 111,30 (Authari and Theudelinda). On the structure of the work, cf. Bullough (1991): 101–3; Goffart (1988): 378–424, esp. 379; 381–2; 384; 388; Mortensen (1991): 77.

27 For Paul as bearer of oral tradition, see for example the works of the literary historian Otto Gschwantler and the historians Donald Bullough and Walter Pohl: Bullough (1991); Gschwantler (1976); Gschwantler (1979); Pohl (2000b). Paul's known written sources, include, among others, the *OGL*; the histories of Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Secundus of Trento (no longer extant), and Bede; Pliny's *Natural History*; Isidore's chronicle and *Etymologiae*; the *Liber pontificalis*; and letters of Gregory the Great. On his use of these written sources, cf. Bethmann and Waitz (1878): 25–7; Coumert (2007): 220–40; Delogu (2004): 124–6; Goffart (1988): 370–3; 380–5; Mortensen (1991): 77–80; Plassmann (2006): 192–4. On the seventh-century histories from Lombard Italy used by Paul in the *HL* (the *OGL*, Secundus of Trento, and a continuation of Prosper of Aquitaine), see further Borri (2014).

as Jordanes did for the Goths; unlike Jordanes, he is not an innovator in this respect, as both the *OGL* and Fredegar also provide the Lombards with origins in Scandinavia.²⁸

The *OGL*, 89 lines in Bethmann and Waitz's edition, provides a very concise narrative of Lombard history, from their origins to the reign of Grimoald: roughly the same period that Paul narrates in about 100 pages in the same edition. As is the case with Paul, the bulk of the text is concerned with the earlier part of Lombard history, with only 14 lines dealing with the period after Authari. The *OGL* is attached to three manuscripts of the *Edictum Rothari* of 643, and is thought to date from the same period; but all manuscript witnesses are actually from the eighth century or later, and all manuscripts that bring together the *Edictum Rothari* and the *OGL* date from after the end of the Lombard kingdom. The oldest manuscript witness to the Scandinavian origin of the Lombards is therefore Fredegar, attested in manuscripts from around 700.²⁹ It is not especially surprising to find a story about Lombards in Fredegar: there had been many wars and treaties between Franks and Lombards from the late sixth century onwards, and the Lombards were the chronicler's immediate neighbours to the east of Burgundy.³⁰

All three sources share a few common elements: the Lombards came from Scandinavia, which is in the north; they were named Lombards because the women used their long hair to pretend to be bearded men and thus scare their enemies; this name is given to them by Wodan (Godan in the *OGL*). There is, however, a progressive expansion in the three accounts, from Fredegar to Paul. Fredegar specifies where Scandinavia is: "inter Danuvium et mare Ocianum";³¹ he also tells us that it was just before a battle with the Huns that the Lombards got their name. It is perhaps worth noting that the naming is reported to us in indirect speech: "Fertur desuper uterque falangiae vox dixisse: 'Haec sunt Langobardi'; quod ab his gentibus fertur eorum deo fuisse locutum, quem fanatice nominant Wodano".³² Immediately after this, the Lombards overpower

28 The narrative of Lombard origins occurs at Fredegar: III,65.

29 Coumert (2007): 157; 203–5.

30 Fredegar: IV,45, and earlier Gregory (*DLH*: VI,42), speak of Lombards being tributaries of the Franks; the money would have gone through Burgundy, presumably along with messengers, from whom Fredegar might have got some of his information. Paul, not surprisingly, does not mention tribute, only speaking of peace being made and renewed (*HL*: III,17; IV,40).

31 "Between the Danube and the Ocean" (Fredegar: III,65).

32 "It is said that a voice spoke from above the two phalanxes: 'These are Lombards'; it is said by those peoples that this was spoken by their own god, whom they, in a pagan fashion, call Wodan" (Fredegar: III,65). The word 'fanatic' is derived from 'fanum', which

the Huns and enter Pannonia, and we are told that Narses invited them, under Alboin, into Italy. (As we have seen, this is also the way their entry into Italy is presented by the earlier *Liber Pontificalis*.)

The *OGL*'s narrative of Scandinavian origins and the naming of the Lombards (all of which is in Chapter 1, which is 20 lines long) is different in a number of respects. It says of Scandinavia that it is an island in the north.³³ We are also told what the Lombards were called before they became Lombards: "Winniles". They are said to be a "gens parua", and we are given the name of a matriarch, Gambara, who rules with her sons Ybor and Agio. While Fredegar tells us that the Lombards left Scandinavia before his account of the battle fought against the Huns and their acquisition of their name, in the *OGL*, it appears that the battle—in this text against Vandals, not Huns—takes place in Scandinavia itself.

Most significantly, the naming of the Lombards occurs not just by means of a voice said to be that of Wodan, but by a rather more involved process:

Tunc Ambri et Assi, hoc est duces Wandalorum, rogaverunt Godan, ut daret eis super Winniles victoriam. Respondit Godan dicens: "Quos sol surgente antea videro, ipsis dabo victoriam". Eo tempore Gambara cum duobus filiis suis, id est Ybor et Agio, qui principes erant super Winniles, rogaverunt Fream, uxorem Godam, ut ad Winniles esset propitia. Tunc Frea dedit consilium, ut sol surgente³⁴ venirent Winniles et mulieres eorum crines solutae circa faciem in similitudinem barbae et cum viris

means (in Christian Latin) a pagan temple; 'fanatice' also means 'madly', which is perhaps suggestive, given that Adam of Bremen (writing in the eleventh century) tells us that 'Wodan' means 'madness' (Schmiedler and Trillmich, ed. and trans. 1968: 1v,26: "Wodan, id est furor"); he appears to be the earliest continental Latin writer to be aware of this. Wodan is equivalent to the Icelandic Óðinn; the name derives from a Germanic root (cf. Gothic 'wōþs'; Old Norse 'óðr'; modern German 'Wut' and 'wütend'), and the meanings of the various Germanic reflexes of this include 'fury', 'possessed by demons', 'mad' or 'frantic' (Green 1998: 79–80; Cleasby and Vigfusson 1957: s.v.). It seems unlikely that any of these connotations were known to Fredegar. Further discussion of Óðinn/Wodan is below at n. 48.

33 Note that while this location of the Scandinavian homeland, shared with Jordanes and Paul the Deacon and ultimately derived circuitously from ancient sources, has no relation to independently verifiable historical reality with regard either to the Goths or the Lombards, Fredegar's location of the Lombard homeland between the Danube and the Ocean might accord more with fact, if we disregard the name he gives this region, and if we can interpret the Ocean as meaning the Baltic.

34 One of the manuscripts has "sole surgente".

suis venirent. Tunc luciscente sol dum surgeret, giravit Frea, uxor Godan, lectum ubi recumbebat vir eius, et fecit faciem eius contra orientem, et excitavit eum. Et ille aspiciens vidit Winniles et mulieres ipsorum habentes crines solutas circa faciem; et ait: “Qui sunt isti longibarbae”? Et dixit Frea ad Godan: “Sicut dedisti nomen, da illis et victoriam”. Et dedit eis victoriam, ut ubi visum esset vindicarent se et victoriam haberent. Ab illo tempore Winnilis Langobardi vocati sunt.³⁵

It is obvious that while Fredegar knew the basic elements of the tale, he either had no access to the full story, or suppressed it. The further history of the Lombards is greatly truncated in Fredegar: they are in Pannonia, and then in Italy, almost immediately; he tells us in a sentence about Alboin's death, and in a few lines about the death of his wife. The *OGL*, in contrast, takes the Lombards through Anthaib, Bainaib and Burgundaib—unknown elsewhere except in Paul's account—to Rugiland,³⁶ before they arrive in Pannonia in Chapter 5. Like Fredegar, the *OGL* passes over Alboin's death briefly; it does, however, present a fairly detailed narrative of Rosamund's death.³⁷

Paul's account accords in essence with that of the *OGL* rather than with Fredegar, but adds a number of elements. He begins his work with a description of “Germania,”³⁸ where he locates a number of peoples who eventually conquered much of Europe; these include the Goths, Vandals, Rugi, Herules and Turcilingi (who are all qualified as ‘barbarian’ peoples). Of the Winniles, Paul says that they originated in Scandinavia, which he then goes on to

35 “Then Ambri and Assi, that is, the leaders of the Vandals, requested Godan that he grant them victory over the Winniles. In response, Godan said: ‘I will give victory to those whom I see first at sunrise’. At the [same] time Gambara and her two sons, that is Ybor and Agio, who were the leaders of the Winniles, requested Frea, the wife of Godan, that she be favourable to the Winniles. Then Frea instructed them that at sunrise the Winniles should come, and their women should loosen their hair around their faces in the manner of a beard and come with their men. In the dawn light as the sun rose, Frea, the wife of Godan, turned the bed on which her husband lay, so that his face was towards the east, and woke him, and he, looking out, saw the Winniles and their women with their loosened hair around their faces, and said: ‘Who are these long-beards?’ And Frea said to Godan: ‘Just as you have given a name, give them victory as well’. And he gave them victory, that they could avenge themselves as they saw fit and achieve victory. From that time the Winniles have been called Langobardi” (*OGL*: 1).

36 *OGL*: 2–4.

37 *OGL*: 5.

38 *HL*: 1,1.

describe, citing Pliny as his authority.³⁹ His third chapter introduces us very briefly to Ibor and Aio, and their mother Gambarā, before he digresses again to tell us about the miracle of the Seven Sleepers, whom he locates somewhere in the cold north, and who are, according to him, both Roman and Christian, but venerated by the barbarian nations; about the Scritobini and the length of the day in northern regions; and about Charybdis, before returning to the Winniles.⁴⁰ He tells us that they left Scandinavia and came to Scoringia, and it is here that they had to do battle with the Vandals.⁴¹

The story of the name-giving is almost exactly the same as in the *OGL*, but is prefaced by Paul's dismissive remark: "refert hoc loco antiquitas ridiculam fabulam".⁴² His disdain is repeated at the end of the story: "Haec risui digna sunt et pro nihil habenda. Victoria enim non potestati est adtributa hominum, sed de caelo potius ministratur".⁴³ He then tells us that the name is to be attributed not to long-haired women, but to the long beards of the ancient Winniles, and explains that 'lang' means long and 'bart' means beard in their language: "nam iuxta illorum linguam 'lang' longam, 'bart' barbam significat".⁴⁴ He says, furthermore, that Wotan is the same as the Mercury of the Romans, and "ab universis Germaniae gentibus ut deus adoratur; qui non circa haec tempora, sed longe antierius, nec in Germania, sed in Graecia fuisse perhibetur".⁴⁵

Before examining Paul's account of the rest of the Lombard migration, it is appropriate to discuss briefly the sources for their Scandinavian origin myth. The location in a place called Scandinavia is itself certainly derived from written works, and quite possibly from Jordanes, though we have no definite way of knowing if the *OGL*-author or Fredegar knew Jordanes, and it is also not clear

39 *HL*: 1,1 (origins in Scandinavia); 1,2 (description of Scandinavia).

40 *HL*: 1,4 (Seven Sleepers); 1,5 (Scritobini); *HL*: 1,6 (Charybdis and Winniles).

41 *HL*: 1,7.

42 "At this point, the ancient source provides a ridiculous fable" (*HL*: 1,8). "Antiquitas" is an ambiguous word, and says nothing about the nature of the ancient source. In this case, though, it seems most likely that the reference is to the *OGL*, rather than to any still-available ancient oral tradition to which Paul had direct access.

43 "These things are worthy only of laughter and should be given no credence; for victory is not to be attributed to the power of men, but rather is brought about from heaven" (*HL*: 1,8). Note that Paul inserts similar sceptical comments with regard to his narrative of Roman origins in his *Romana*, with which he prefaces the Roman history largely of Eutropius that comprises the first ten books of this text (Droysen, ed. 1879: 6; 8; Maskarinec 2013: 305).

44 *HL*: 1,9 (note that he uses the present tense).

45 "He is worshipped as a god by all the peoples of Germania; but he is said to have been not in these times, but long before, and not in Germania but in Greece" (*HL*: 1,9).

why Fredegar in particular should have chosen to lift the story of Scandinavian origins from Jordanes and apply it to the Lombards unless he had some independent source to support such an attribution.⁴⁶ There are absolutely no sources before the *OGL* for the names of Gambara and her sons, nor for the exact story of the naming of the Lombards as provided in these narratives. Moreover, while Jonas of Bobbio's *Life of Columbanus* (c.639–c.642) does mention a Wodan among the Sueves,⁴⁷ Jonas does not mention Wodan's wife, who is not named in any other written source of this period or before;⁴⁸ the name must therefore come from some oral source.⁴⁹ There must therefore have been some sort of knowledge in the first half of the seventh century, most probably

46 Note, though, that both Jordanes and the *OGL* (but not Fredegar) identify Scandinavia as an island. It is of course possible that the *OGL* did indeed predate Fredegar, and was his source, though his account is, as we have seen, different in many respects.

47 Krusch (ed. 1902): I.xxvii,53. Note that both Tacitus and Ptolemy (cited at n. 1) associate Lombards with Sueves.

48 Wodan is attested in a number of sources as a god of speakers of Germanic languages (Old English and Old Saxon: 'Woden'; Old High German: 'Wutan'; 'Wuotan'; Old Norse: 'Óðinn'), but the mentions of him in Jonas, the *OGL*, and Fredegar are the earliest extant textual witnesses. From Old Norse sources we know that he is the god of war, and grants victory to warriors: in the early middle ages, he occurs in this role only in the Lombard narratives. Frea appears to correspond (in terms of the kind of actions attributed to her as well as the name and role as Wodan's wife) to the Old Norse Frigg, Óðinn's wife; once more, such a figure is first mentioned in the Lombard narratives. There is therefore some relation between ancient Lombard mythology and that of other Germanic-speaking peoples. This does not, however, justify interpreting the Lombard sources with the help of thirteenth-century Norse texts; even the latter are certainly not some sort of 'pure' heathen material, seeing that they were recorded in every case several centuries after the conversion of Scandinavia to Christianity, and the adoption of a significant amount of Latin learning (the possibility that Scandinavian monks knew Paul cannot be excluded). On Wodan/Óðinn and Frea/Frigg, see Orchard (1997): 119–21; 272–7; Simek (1995): 109–11; 114–16; 302–16; 480–1; and specifically on this figure in seventh-century Latin sources, see Borri (2014): 66–8. On the influence of Latin sources and Latinity more generally in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Scandinavian texts, see Ghosh (2011): 141; 146–7.

49 Coumert (2007): 171; 176. On Jonas, see also Coumert (2007): 167–71. Although Procopius thinks Lombards were Christian at the end of the fifth century, Gregory the Great speaks of specifically Lombard pagan rites (de Vogüé, ed. 1978–80: III,27–8). For discussion of the religion of the early Lombards and the relevant sources, see Coumert (2007): 171–5; 232–7; Everett (2003): 59–65; Fanning (1981); Pohl (2000a). As is immediately clear from the vast range of material presented by Filotas (2005), practices condemned as pagan by clerics were nevertheless not uncommon among peoples formally Christian for several centuries after their conversion; the reference to pagan practices need not mean that the Lombards were not (nominally) Christian. The formal conversion is thus no reason to believe that

orally transmitted, containing a narrative relating to the naming of the Lombards and the names of Gambara, Ibor and Agio, which also associated them with pagan gods. It is impossible to know how old any such material might have been. However, there is no need to view the story of the naming as necessarily linked with a narrative of a migration from Scandinavia; there is no evidence for an oral tradition of Scandinavian origins.⁵⁰ It seems reasonable to conclude, following Coumert, that the *OGI*'s story of Lombard origins is a composite of oral material that probably provided the names of Gambara and her sons, Wodan and Frea, and the story about how the Lombard name was given; and written narratives—possibly including those of Jordanes and Procopius—regarding peoples migrating from the north.⁵¹

With the exception of the story about Lamissio,⁵² Paul's additions to the Lombard origin narrative up to their arrival in Rugiland, at the borders of Rome, can be plausibly traced to written sources.⁵³ The etymology of the Lombard name itself corresponds both to what we can deduce about Langobardic from our knowledge of other Germanic languages, and to Isidore's explanation for the name⁵⁴—though it is perhaps important that Paul appears to present the etymology as if he knows Langobardic, not as something derived from Isidore. With regard to this part of Lombard ancient history, therefore, there is nothing in any of Paul's expansions to the narrative of the *OGI* to point to his access to oral sources in the late eighth century that were independent of the (written) *OGI*.

We cannot be sure how long the Lombards used their native (Germanic) vernacular after having entered Italy; by the time Paul composed the *HL*, there is little evidence for widespread use of any Germanic vernacular, though some level of linguistic knowledge possibly did survive, and it has been suggested that the language might have been more commonly known in the first half of

any knowledge of pre-Christian gods would immediately have been eradicated. See further the discussion of Paul's presentation of Lombard religion later in this chapter.

50 Coumert (2007): 178–96, esp. 192–3.

51 Coumert (2007): 192–6.

52 *HL*: 15–18.

53 Coumert (2007): 226–36, identifies as possible sources Aethicus Ister, Caesar, Florus, Jordanes, Isidore, Pliny, Pomponius Mela, the *Liber monstrorum*, Martial, Orosius, and Tacitus. With the exception of the story of the Cynocephali (*HL*: 1,11), the material from these sources does not seem to be presented as history of the Lombards, but is inserted in the form of digressions about other peoples. There is no source for the Scritobini (*HL*: 1,5), who seem to be a composite of barbarian stereotypes; they too seem to have no relation to the Lombard narrative.

54 *Etym.*: IX.ii,95.

the eighth century, the years of Paul's childhood.⁵⁵ It seems nevertheless unlikely that the linguistic survival was vibrant enough to have been sufficient to bear a tradition of Langobardic oral narrative of any sort into the 770s, and indeed, there is no surviving evidence for any oral tradition in a Langobardic vernacular whatsoever.⁵⁶ This would suggest that any ancient narratives in Langobardic probably did not survive by the time Paul wrote, and any oral narratives of Paul's day would not have been independent of extant written versions in Latin. (Even if the language did survive, given the extent of Latinity, it is extremely unlikely that any narratives contained in Langobardic would have been untouched by influence from Latin sources.) The narrative presented by Paul would have been known, but the source in his time was probably not any independent (vernacular) oral tradition; there is no evidence for any oral matter regarding the migration out of Scandinavia in Paul's time,⁵⁷ and if there were orally circulating stories, they could easily have derived from the Latin, written *OGL*, and thus perhaps ultimately (with respect to Scandinavian origins) from Jordanes.

Paul does, however, expand on certain elements of early Lombard history with narratives that do not have parallels elsewhere: after telling us how the Lombards received their name, he has a long narrative of their progress into Italy, in the course of which they encounter Amazons, Bulgarians, Herules, and Gepids.⁵⁸ While the Amazons are clearly taken from literary sources, they are associated with a narrative about king Lamissio and his birth that has no precedent.⁵⁹ The battle with the Herules is mentioned briefly in the *OGL*,⁶⁰ but Paul, unlike the *OGL*, tells us its cause: the Lombard princess Rumetrude sends word to invite a Herule prince for a drink; when she sets eyes on his small stature, she mocks him, and he responds in kind. She dissimulates her fury, invites him to sit, and has him killed, thus instigating war. This story is not extant elsewhere. Finally, while the battles with the Gepids are mentioned in the *OGL*, Paul adds a number of details regarding Alboin and Turisind, the Gepid king; in his narratives about Alboin, as in his story on Rumetrude and the Herule prince, Paul lays stress on personal characteristics and their role in

55 On the question of the survival of the Lombard Germanic vernacular, see the discussion in Everett (2003): 100–29; cf. Haubrichs (2009), who believes that eighth-century Lombard society was bilingual at least till around the 750s.

56 On the scant surviving evidence for Langobardic 'oral tradition', see Green (2009): 184–6.

57 Coumert (2007): 238–40.

58 *HL*: 1,15 (Amazons); *HL*: 1,16–17 (Bulgarians); *HL*: 1,20 (Herules); *HL*: 1,21–4; 27 (Gepids).

59 Lamissio is named at *OGL*: 2; but this text gives no further details about him; see Goffart (1988): 379–80; 385, on this part of the narrative.

60 *OGL*: 4.

political events, and spins out the narrative of Alboin into epic form. In the following section, I shall focus on the stories about Alboin as an illustration of the status of potentially oral-derived narratives in Paul's work.

Legendary Narratives in the Historia Langobardorum

As noted above, the history of the Lombards under Alboin takes up almost all of book II, and most of it is narrated in a matter-of-fact style, without much detail about individual incidents. Three elements of the narratives about Alboin stand out, however: his acquisition of Turismod's arms; his fashioning of a cup out of Cunimund's skull; and his death. Towards the end of book I, we learn that the Lombards, under their prince Alboin, win a famous victory over the Gepids, in which the Gepid prince Turismod is killed by Alboin. Following this, the Lombards suggest to Alboin's father Audoin that his son be made his companion at table ("in convivio comes esset").

Quibus Audoin respondit, se hoc facere minime posse, ne ritum gentis infringeret. "Scitis" inquit "non esse apud nos consuetudinem, ut regis cum patre filius prandeat, nisi prius a rege gentis exterarum arma suscipiat".⁶¹

In the next chapter, Alboin sets out to remedy his deficiency: he goes to Turisind, Turismod's father, and explains his case. The Gepid king invites Alboin to sit at his side, where his son used to sit, but he cannot contain his grief; incited by the king's anguish, another of his sons begins to provoke the Lombards with insults;⁶² the Lombards respond in kind, and a battle almost ensues.⁶³ But Turisind intervenes:

Tunc rex a mensa prosiliens, sese in medium obiecit suosque ab ira belloque conpescuit, interminans primitus eum puniri, qui primus pugnam commisisset; non esse victoriam Deo placitam, dicens, cum quis in domo propria hospitem perimit. Sic denique iurgio conpresso, iam deinceps laetis animis convivium peragunt. Sumensque Turisindus arma Turismodi

61 "To this Audoin responded that he certainly could not do it, as it would go against the rite of the people. 'You know', he said, 'that it is not our custom that the king's son should eat with his father unless he first receives the weapons of a king of a foreign people'" (*HL*: I,23).

62 *HL* I,24: "Langobardos iniuriis lacessere coepit".

63 Flyting of this sort is a common feature in Germanic, but also in many other literatures (cf. below, Chapter 5, n. 51); it should not, therefore, be taken as a necessary marker of some sort of specifically Germanic and oral tradition as a source for this passage, though that possibility also cannot be excluded.

filii sui, ea Alboin tradidit, eumque cum pace incolumem ad patris regnum remisit.⁶⁴

Having received the arms, Alboin is made his father's table-companion; he—and no less Turisind—are praised by all: "Mirantur qui aderant et laudant audaciam Alboin, nec minus attollunt laudibus Turisindi maximam fidem".⁶⁵

After two chapters extolling Justinian and Benedict of Nursia,⁶⁶ we return to Alboin, and are told of Audoin's death and Alboin's accession to kingship. Turisind has died too, and Cunimund is now Gepid king; he desires war against the Lombards to avenge old insults ("vindicare veteres Gepidorum iniurias cupiens").⁶⁷ Alboin leads his Lombards to victory, and we are now given an important detail about the aftermath of the battle:

In eo proelio Alboin Cunimundum occidit, caputque illius sublatum, ad bibendum ex eo poculum fecit. Quod genus poculi apud eos "scala" dicitur, lingua vero Latina patera vocatur. Cuius filiam nomine Rosimundam cum magna simul multitudine diversi sexus et aetatis duxit captivam; quam, quia Chlotsuinda obierat, in suam, ut post patuit, perniciem, duxit uxorem [...] Alboin vero ita praeclarum longe lateque nomen percrebuit, ut hactenus etiam tam apud Baioariorum gentem quamque et Saxonum, sed et alios eiusdem linguae homines eius liberalitas et gloria bellorum felicitas et virtus in eorum carminibus celebretur.⁶⁸

64 "Then the king, jumping up from the table, interposed himself and restrained his men from anger and war, threatening to punish first the one who began a fight. He said that a victory is not pleasing to God when anyone kills a guest in his own home. With the quarrel having been thus suppressed, they then went back to the feast in good spirits. Turisind took the arms of Turismod, his son, and gave them to Alboin, and sent him back to his father's kingdom in peace and unhurt" (*HL*: 1,24). Note the frequent alliteration in this passage, which is probably an indication that Paul was aiming for a more elevated style than in the bulk of his history, which is presented in a much plainer manner.

65 "Those present were amazed and praised Alboin's audacity; no less did they praise the great good faith of Turisind" (*HL*: 1,24). On the story of Alboin and Turisind, see further (albeit with some caution) the studies of Gschwantler (1975), and Wagner (1982).

66 *HL*: 1,25–6.

67 *HL*: 1,27.

68 "In that battle Alboin killed Cunimund, and having taken off his head, he had a drinking-cup made of it. This type of cup is called a 'scala' among the Lombards, but in the Latin language it is called a 'patera'. Alboin took Cunimund's daughter Rosamund captive, along with a great multitude of people of both sexes and all ages, and since Clotsind [Alboin's first wife] had died, he took her [Rosamund] as his wife, causing his own doom, as later became apparent [...] Alboin's truly great reputation spread far and wide, to the extent

A number of aspects to this passage are worthy of note. Paul explicitly draws attention to the variance between the language of the Lombards of Alboin's time, who were presumably the ones who would have used the word 'scala', and the speech of his own period, when Latin was the appropriate language for the telling of Lombard history, and when at least some members of the audience might not know what a 'scala' was. More significantly, although Paul could hardly have viewed the fashioning of a skull-cup out of an enemy's head as good Christian etiquette, if not exactly commending Alboin, he certainly does not censure him, and tells us that Alboin was greatly praised—and not just among the Lombards—and well-known for qualities that appear to have been especially prized: generosity, courage, and skill in battle. This praise, we are told, occurs in songs—an explicit reference to oral tradition, which, from Paul's wording, appears to have lasted for about two centuries, into his own time ('celebrare' is in the present tense).⁶⁹

The songs are not, however, those of the Lombards, but of the Bavarians and Saxons and others of the same languages, to which group the Lombards do not appear to belong; they are not, at any rate, explicitly identified as Germanic-speakers. (This is nevertheless an early expression of awareness of linguistic kinship among a number of Germanic-speaking groups, and appears to demonstrate also that narratives travelled among them that commemorated people not because of any sense of ethnic or national identification, but rather because of linguistic kinship and the secular values those narratives propagated; I revert to this point in Chapter 7.) Thus Paul here certainly claims to be aware of oral material in the vernacular celebrating Alboin; but he does not claim to know oral or vernacular material *among the Lombards* that commemorates Alboin. If this story derives from any oral tradition, therefore, there is no evidence in Paul's words that it came to him from a living Lombard oral tradition.

The story of the skull-cup is an important one, though it does not necessarily seem so when we first encounter it—and the way in which it is woven into

that among both the Bavarians and the Saxons, and even other men of the same tongue, his generosity and glory, and his skill and courage in war, is celebrated in their songs" (*HL*: I,27).

69 The use of present tense here need not signify much, as Paul is not averse to using the historic present. Moreover, he also states that the term 'scala' means a cup, in the present tense, "among them" ("apud eos"); presumably this refers to the Lombards of the past (and 'dicitur' is another example of the historic present), otherwise there would be no need to translate the term into Latin unless his intended audience was of speakers of non-Germanic languages. It must be conceded that Paul's audience for this text and his expectations of that audience are problems that remain unresolved.

the narrative is, indeed, a testament to Paul's skill as a storyteller. This narrative comes at the end of the first book of Paul's history, which begins with the story of the origin of the Lombards and of their name, and ends with Alboin, recently become king, being praised—but with a hint of foreboding, for we are told already that his marriage to Rosamund would kill him. The second book follows Alboin and his Lombards again, as they fight against neighbouring peoples, are led into Italy by Alboin, and gradually subjugate all of northern Italy. Close to the end of the second book, we are told (at some length) in a famous passage of how Alboin dies:

Qui rex postquam in Italia tres annos et sex menses regnavit, insidiis suae coniugis interemptus est. Causa autem interfectionis eius fuit. Cum in convivio ultra quam oportuerat apud Veronam laetus resederet, cum poculo quod de capite Cunimundi regis sui soceris fecerat reginae ad bibendum vinum dari praecepit atque eam ut cum patre suo laetanter biberet invitavit. Hoc ne cui videatur impossibile, veritatem in Christo loquor: ego hoc poculum vidi in quodam die festo Ratchis principem ut illud convivis suis ostentaret manu tenentem. Igitur Rosemunda ubi rem animadvertit, altum concipiens in corde dolorem, quem conpescere non valens, mox in mariti necem patris funus vindicatura exarsit, consiliumque mox cum Helmechis, qui Regis scilpor, hoc est armiger, et conlactaneus erat, ut regem interficeret, iniit. Qui reginae persuasit, ut ipsa Peredeo, qui erat vir fortissimus, in hoc consilium adsciret. Peredeo cum reginae suadenti tanti nefas consensum adhibere nollet, illa se noctu in lectulo suae vestiariae, cum qua Peredeo stupri consuetudinem habebat, supposuit; ubi Peredeo rem nescius veniens, cum regina concubuit. Cumque illa patrato iam scelere ab eo quaereret, quam se esse existimaret, et ipse nomen suae amicae, quam esse putabat, nominasset, regina subiunxit: “Nequaquam ut putas, sed ego Rosemunda sum”, inquit. “Certe nunc talem rem, Peredeo, perpetrata habes, ut aut tu Alboin interficies, aut ipse te suo gladio extinguet”. Tunc ille intellexit malum quod fecit, et qui sponte noluerat, tali modo in regis necem coactus adsensit. Tunc Rosemunda, dum se Alboin in meridie sopori dedisset, magnum in palatio silentium fieri praecipiens, omnia alia arma subtrahens, spatham illius ad lectuli caput, ne tolli aut evaginari possit, fortiter conligavit, et iuxta consilium Peredeo Helmechis interfectorem omni bestia crudelior introduxit. Alboin subito de sopore experrectus, malum quod imminebat intellegens, manum citius ad spatham porrexit; quam strictius religatam abstrahere non valens, adprehenso tamen scabello subpedaneo, se cum eo per aliquod spatium defendit. Sed heu pro dolor! vir bellicosissimus et

summae audaciae nihil contra hostem praevalens, quasi unus de inertibus interfectus est, uniusque mulierculae consilio periit, qui per tot hostium strages bello famosissimus extitit.⁷⁰

After Alboin's death, for many years the Lombards had no king, and were no longer a coherent, united polity (even by the standards of their time); in this situation, the second book of Paul's history closes.⁷¹

70 "After the king [scil.: Alboin] had reigned in Italy for three years and six months, he was killed by the plotting of his wife—but there was a cause for his murder. While Alboin sat rejoicing more than was fitting at Verona, he commanded that the queen be given wine to drink in the cup which he had made from the head of King Cunimund, his father-in-law, and invited her to drink in joy with her father. (Lest this should appear impossible to anyone, I speak truly in Christ: I myself have seen King Ratchis holding that cup in his hand on a certain feast day in order that he might show it to his intimates.) Rosamund, when she thought about the matter, felt a great pain in her heart which she was unable to restrain; a plan to kill her husband as vengeance for the death of her father soon began to take root in her, and she took counsel with Helmechis as to how she might kill the king. Helmechis was the 'scilpor', that is the shield-bearer of the king, and also his foster-brother. He persuaded the queen that she should include Peredeo, who was a very mighty man, in this plot. Since Peredeo did not want to give his consent to the queen as she persuaded him to do such an evil deed, at night she lay herself in the bed of her lady-in-waiting, who was Peredeo's mistress. Peredeo, unaware of this, entered the room and slept with the queen. When the crime had been completed, she asked him who he thought she was, and after he had named his mistress, whom he thought she was, the queen responded: 'It is not at all as you think: I am Rosamund. You have now perpetrated such an act, Peredeo, that either you must kill Alboin, or he himself will extinguish you with his sword'. Then Peredeo perceived the evil he had done, and though he had himself not wished to, coerced by such means he agreed to the murder of the king. Following this, when Alboin had gone for his afternoon nap, Rosamund commanded that there should be complete silence in the palace, removed all other weapons, and bound his sword firmly at the head of the bed, where he would be unable to raise or unsheathe it, and following the advice of Peredeo, she led Helmechis, a killer more wild than any beast, into the room. Alboin, waking suddenly from his sleep, perceived the imminent danger and reached his hand to his sword. Finding that he was unable to pull it out as it was bound too tightly, he nevertheless grasped his footstool and defended himself with it for a time against Helmechis. But alas, what sorrow! That most war-like man of the greatest courage was unable to prevail against his enemy, and was killed as though he were an incompetent. He, who had been so renowned for his slaughter of enemies in war, perished by the plotting of a mere woman" (*HL*: II,28).

71 For a detailed discussion of Paul's treatment of the story of Alboin's death and Paul's sources, with copious references to further scholarship, see Borri (2011); cf. already Ghosh (2009): 116–27, not cited by Borri.

We note that Paul's sense of narrative structure is careful and skilful: the foreboding at the end of the first book, when we first hear of the skull-cup, fulfils itself by the end of the second book; the first book ends with Alboin becoming king, leading to the crossing into Italy at the beginning of the second book, which ends with the death of Alboin, and political chaos in Lombard Italy. If Alboin embodies the fate of the Lombards, his kingship brings them success in battle and a new home, and his death leads to the falling apart of their polity. Certainly, this turmoil is ultimately brought about by Alboin's skull-cup; we could thus argue that the brutality towards Christian Italians that follows Alboin's death because of the lack of strong leadership (see below) is caused by Alboin's actions. This is far from explicit, though, and the lack of clear condemnation is surely to be ascribed to the author's intention not to paint the distant Lombard past in too dark a colour. Note also that in this passage, no negative qualifiers are used to describe Alboin—indeed, at his death he is described in entirely positive terms—whereas Helmechis is compared to beasts in his ferocity. Furthermore, the narrative of Alboin's death starts with the statement that he was killed by the 'insidia'—a clearly negative term—of his wife; in contrast, in the next chapter Paul tells us that Alboin's killers perished by the judgement of God: "*Dei omnipotentis iudicio interfectores iniquissimi uno momento perierunt*".⁷²

It would seem fair to state, therefore, that while there is really no explicit moral texture to the way in which Paul presents the story of Alboin, on the whole, he appears to be presented more in a positive than a negative light. He was a great king, who certainly did things that—ultimately—had unfortunate consequences for his people; but this latter quality is never reflected on at any point in Paul's narrative, and it is equally the case that it is under Alboin that the Lombards settled in Italy in the first place, thus providing a point of origin for their later history into Paul's own time, surely a positive attribute. The lack of judgement on Alboin might indicate that the stories were inherited from other sources, but the way they fit within the structure of a larger narrative is clearly a matter of Paul's own construction, not deriving from any putative oral tradition;⁷³ this suggests that Paul did not just lift the stories from elsewhere and present them without much intervention, and therefore that the neutral stance is intentional. In any case, given the way Paul structures his narrative as a whole, it hardly seems likely that he would not have inserted any moral judgement, even in a story derived from another source, had he not wished to

72 "By the judgement of the omnipotent God the most evil murderers perished simultaneously" (*HL*: II, 29).

73 Goffart (1988): 390–4.

remain neutral: if this story does come from an oral source, it has certainly been shaped by Paul the writer as well.

Paul had, of course, written sources for this tale: it is reported first by Marius of Avenches,⁷⁴ who wrote in the 580s, about a decade after the events, and it is repeated within the following fifty years by Gregory of Tours,⁷⁵ John of Biclar,⁷⁶ and the continuator of Prosper's chronicle,⁷⁷ and shortly after by the *OGL*,⁷⁸ and Fredegar.⁷⁹ In comparison to the one line in the modern edition of the *OGL*, Paul's narrative of Alboin's death takes up 34 lines in the same edition—a significant expansion. None of the other sources contain anything of such length and detail, though they all know that the king was killed by some sort of cooperative measure

74 "Hoc anno Albuenus rex Langobardorum a suis, id est, Hilmaegis cum reliquis consentiente uxore sua Verona interfectus est" (Favrod, ed. 1991: s. a. 572: "In that year Alboin, the king of the Lombards, was killed in Verona by his own followers, that is, by Hilmaegis and others, with the consent of Alboin's wife").

75 "Mortua autem Chlothosinda, uxore Alboeni, aliam duxit coniugem, cuius patrem ante paucum tempus interfecerat. Qua de causa mulier in odio semper virum habens, locum opperiebat, in quo possit iniurias patris ulcisci; unde factum est, ut unum ex famulis concupiscens, virum veninu medicaret" (*DLH*: IV,41: "After Chlothosinda, the wife of Alboin, had died, he [Alboin] took another spouse, whose father he had killed a short time previously. For this reason the woman, who always hated her husband, awaited an opportunity when she could avenge the injustice to her father. Therefore it happened that she, desiring one of his entourage, administered poison to her husband").

76 "Aluinus Langobardorum rex factione coniugis suae a suis nocte interficitur" (Cardelle de Hartmann, ed. 2000: 24: "Alboin the king of the Lombards is killed at night through the plotting of his wife by his own followers").

77 "uxoris suae Rosemundae regis Conimundi filiae dolo apud Veronam interfectus est auxiliante sibi Elmigisilo, cum quo adulterari credebatur: quod postea manifestum est, dum eum sibi in loco mariti tam coniugio quam etiam regno copulare conata est" (Mommсен, ed. 1892b: 337–8: "he was killed by the cunning of his wife Rosamund, the daughter of king Cunimund, at Verona, with the help of Elmigisilus, with whom she is thought to have been having an affair; this later became known, for she tried to join herself to him in place of her husband both in marital union and in the rule").

78 "Regnavit Albuin in Italia annos tres, et occisus est in Verona in palatio ab Hilmichis et Rosemunda uxore sua per consilium Peritheo" (*OGL*: 5: "Alboin reigned in Italy for three years, and was killed in Verona in the palace by Hilmichis and Rosemunda, his wife, with the counsel of Peritheo").

79 Fredegar: III,65; this is just an edited repetition of Gregory's words. For a more detailed discussion of these and some other seventh-century sources, see Borri (2011): 234–40; for interesting suggestions regarding the function of the Alboin narrative and its genesis in the seventh century, see Borri (2011): 240–8.

between his wife and his followers.⁸⁰ Paul obviously felt it appropriate to expand considerably on the terse narrative contained in his (written) sources, adding the motifs of alcohol, provocation, seduction, and of course the gory skull-cup, instead of saying simply—as all other written sources do—that Alboin was killed by his own people, with the connivance of his wife. Paul's narrative also contains the elements of dialogue and blackmail, and the psychological motivation, missing in earlier reports—and also lacking, for the most part, as general characteristics of classical historical narratives in Latin. These various elements with which Paul expands the story in comparison to the earlier written sources are not just an expansion of the contemporary reports; their use is also a significant departure from the very dry style of the late Roman tradition of historiography, to which Eutropius's *Breviarum*, Paul's source and model for his *Historia Romana*, belonged—which is indeed the style followed, for the most part, by Paul even in the *HL*.⁸¹

The heightened style of the Alboin narratives (and also the story of Authari's wooing of Theudelinda⁸²) is clearly intended to make these parts of Lombard history stand out in the reader's mind; as we have seen, there is a link between the three legendary portions of Alboin's story in terms of how the original encounter with the Gepids ultimately leads to Alboin's death by his wife's plotting. Alboin is, for Paul, a king of great significance not only because he brought the Lombards into Italy, but also because he was an ally of the Romans, and entered Italy peacefully. Although we do not know his religious affiliation from Paul, he is clearly not intended to be seen primarily in a negative light. Similarly,

80 Paul also tells us (*HL*: 29–30) what happens to the plotters afterwards: Helmechis is unable to take the throne, and he flees with Rosamund to Ravenna; as a result of plots laid by the prefect there, he and Rosamund end up killing each other. Once more, this is an expansion of what is contained in the *OGL* (*OGL*: 5), but of far lesser proportions: ten lines become 30. In contrast, the story of the naming of the Lombards is reduced from 16 lines in the *OGL* to ten in the *HL*. On the Alboin/Rosamund material in these various sources, see also the detailed study of Gschwantler (1976).

81 A brief analysis of Paul's 'oral' style is given by Martínez Pizarro (1989): 70–2; 190–2; he provides, however, no insights as to why Paul chose to write some passages in such a manner, and his attribution of the differences in Paul's style from classical historiography to the influence of oral tradition needs further refinement and qualification. Gregory of Tours has a similarly vivid style, but in his narratives about the recent past, not a period about two centuries before he wrote; there is no suggestion that Gregory's stories are derived from any sort of formal 'oral tradition'. Note also that the Bible contains much that could be said to have a vivid style of the sort found in 'oral tradition', but by the time it could have served as a potential model for the Latin authors of the early middle ages, it was itself very much a written model, not an oral one; supposed markers of an 'oral' style are not necessarily very reliable indicators of an actual use of oral sources.

82 *HL*: III,30.

Authari's wooing of Theudelinda received a heightened, more epic style because of his significance for Lombard history: he was responsible for bringing Theudelinda to the Lombards; Theudelinda is a queen greatly praised for her religiosity, and it is because of her that Agilulf converts to Catholicism (in the only conversion of a Lombard king that is reported). Thus it seems likely that the tale of her wooing is highlighted to stress, in advance, the significance of the marriage to Authari.⁸³ It would appear to be the case, therefore, that a more legendary style was, in Paul's view, appropriate to highlight narratives regarding people of particular positive significance for Lombard history.

Literary historians have been happy to see in the stories about Alboin evidence of a Lombard oral tradition that corresponds to traditions in other Germanic languages: Paul is supposed simply to be drawing on available oral sources in the form of lays about Alboin.⁸⁴ It seems reasonable to assume that Paul was indeed drawing on some kind of oral material, since despite the existence of a number of written sources, there is nothing in them that could have provided such a rich narrative without substantial supplementing from elsewhere.⁸⁵ But we need to be cautious about the assumptions we make regarding the form and language of any putative oral sources.⁸⁶ To begin with, Paul does not mention any 'oral tradition' as a source for his stories. To be sure, he tells us about songs regarding Alboin,⁸⁷ but these are not mentioned in the context of Paul's most lengthy elaborations on his written sources, and are not said to contain anything about Alboin's death, but rather about his deeds in war and his generosity.⁸⁸ Moreover, Paul makes no reference to specifically Lombard

83 The aspects of the Alboin and Theudelinda narratives relating to religion are discussed in the next section of the present chapter.

84 Gschwantler (1975); Gschwantler (1976); Gschwantler (1979); Wagner (1982). Historians have often been only slightly less credulous: see for example Bullough (1991); Moisl (1985); Pohl (2000b).

85 Coumert (2007): 246–9, argues that the Lombard origin narratives derive directly from antique ethnographic traditions, much as Jordanes's Gothic origin myth did; this may be true with regard to the exact etymology (though anyone with any knowledge of a Germanic vernacular could come up with this) and the location in Scandinavia. But Gambara and her sons, Woden and Frea, and the naming of the Lombards by Woden, cannot be shown to derive from any ancient source; nor can the Alboin and Authari/Theudelinda stories.

86 Similarly Everett (2003): 110–14. On the possible nature, age, and function of any oral sources for the narrative as Paul presents it, see also Ghosh (2007): 236–9.

87 *HL*: 1,27.

88 Of course, praise of deeds and generosity is characteristic of elegiac laments too (cf. e.g. *Beowulf*: 3178–82); but what is important is that Paul does not explicitly cite songs in the context of his narrative of Alboin's death.

songs anywhere: what he mentions are songs explicitly of other peoples, and he tells us nowhere that the Lombards are among those peoples who have the same language as the Bavarians and Saxons. If he understood the various words he translates for his readers as being Langobardic, he would have also known that this was a language cognate with those of the Bavarians and Saxons—but if the Lombards still spoke the same language, Paul would not have needed to translate so many Langobardic words.⁸⁹

We know that Paul's narratives of the distant past draw on a number of written sources—and not just for the histories of other peoples and ecclesiastical matters—many of which he cites explicitly.⁹⁰ However, in the Alboin narratives especially, Paul uses material not contained in any extant written sources.⁹¹ Unlike Jordanes, who refers more than once to oral sources, but does not seem explicitly to cite them, and whose unsourced material that could derive from oral sources tends to be similarly legendary, but generally much less elaborate,⁹² Paul does not explicitly refer to oral sources, but nevertheless clearly had access to reasonably detailed stories that must derive from an oral milieu. What is less clear is the nature of his oral sources.

Paul is not exactly bashful about the distant past of the Lombards; as we have seen, he has far more to say about their pre-Italian history and the first century of their time in Italy than later periods, and he does so without censure of their religion or customs. There seems to be no reason why he should choose not to mention Lombard oral sources for his material if he had them, unless he felt that they were so familiar to his audience that they could be taken for granted. One does get the feeling that the story of Wodan and Freia is included because Paul felt it was too well-known to be left out,⁹³ but it seems to derive directly from a written source alone—and unlike the Alboin narrative,

89 Nor would he have needed to do so for the Franks, if one were to assume they were his audience. Note that all the various Germanic words Paul uses in his narrative—of which I have cited only a few—are in fact demonstrably words belonging to a Germanic language, and Paul clearly correctly understands what they mean.

90 Explicit references to written sources: *HL*: I,2 (Pliny); II,20 (a no-longer extant *catalogus provinciarum Italiae*); IV,40 (Secundus of Trento); IV,42 (Rothari's Edict); III,19; VI,16 (epitaphs).

91 This is true also of his narratives of Authari's wooing (*HL*: III,30), and his story of his own ancestor's immigration to Italy (*HL*: IV,27).

92 As Goffart points out, "Jordanes narrates facts having the appearance of legend [...] but he rarely breathes life into such scenes" (Goffart 1988: 425); Paul's narratives of Alboin, Authari, and of Lopichis's migration to Italy have a vividness unmatched by anything in Jordanes.

93 Goffart (1988): 386; Pohl (1994a): 382; 384; Pohl (2000b): 24.

Paul here does not expand, but rather reduces the space given to this story in comparison with the *OGL*. It is perhaps significant that Paul claims to have seen the skull-cup himself: this might indicate that oral narratives were attached in some way to particular objects, in this case the cup.⁹⁴ But we should note, first, that these are more likely to have been informal oral narratives rather than a formal, poetic oral tradition; and second, that even the story of the skull-cup itself (though probably not the story of its consequences) might draw on a literary source: Pomponius Mela also mentions Asian barbarians who make cups out of their enemies' skulls.⁹⁵ Overall, Paul gives us very little in the way of explicit markers on which we can hang any notion of a surviving Lombard oral tradition. It seems safer to conclude that while Paul certainly would have drawn on some sort of Lombard oral material, this was most probably not any sort of formal narrative (epics or lays), but was more likely passed on in some sort of informal prose stories.⁹⁶ It is also unlikely that his oral sources were in a Langobardic, Germanic vernacular.⁹⁷ It is clear furthermore that whatever

94 A sensitive analysis of the use of objects as pegs for memory (albeit in a different historical context) is provided by van Houts (1999): 93–120; on the innovations of early medieval narrators in creating 'object-centred' stories, see also Martínez Pizarro (1989): 173–211. Apart from the skull-cup, Paul also tells us, after concluding his narrative of Alboin's death, about Alboin's grave, which still exists in his own time, and had recently been opened by a Lombard aristocrat, who found in it Alboin's sword; this too might indicate that narratives on Alboin were linked to objects connected with him. On this sword, and the meaning of objects connected to Alboin's death, see further Borri (2011): 260–2.

95 Silberman (ed. and trans. 1988): II.i.13. On other earlier texts mentioning skull-cups, see further Borri (2011): 257; 259–60.

96 Donald Bullough believes that Paul was "acknowledged at Court [...] as the next link in a chain or oral transmission" (Bullough 1991, 109), and was a counterpart to Icelandic storytellers of the eleventh century. Apart from the fact that our information regarding the transmission of Icelandic narratives is late, insufficient, and probably untrustworthy (Ghosh 2011), there is no evidence at all to suggest that any such chain of transmission existed in Lombard Italy, nor that Paul was acknowledged by anyone anywhere to have been a link in such a chain. Similar objections apply to Pohl (2000b). Gschwantler (1975), Gschwantler (1976), Gschwantler (1979), and Wagner (1982), have no suggestions as to the nature of transmission of the material they assume was oral and in the form of lays ("Lieder"). On the relationship between postulated informal prose stories and versified heroic legend, see also Kuhn (1961).

97 It is possible, of course, that he did have access to songs in another Germanic dialect, since he mentions them himself, though only in the specific context of praise-poems on Alboin (*HL*: I,27). Bavarian songs might be a possible source for his narrative of Authari's bridal quest, and Saxon songs might have provided him with material on Alboin (note that at *HL*: I,6, Paul also tells us that Alboin, on entering Italy, asked for assistance from his old friends the Saxons: "ab amicis suis vetulis Saxonibus auxilium petit"). But no such

the nature of sources, Paul crafted them according to his own purposes within his history (most likely also using some written material to aid him as well): the legendary narratives are well-integrated within a larger whole, and that broader narrative context is surely unlikely to have been the same that the stories might have had in any putative epic or lay.⁹⁸

We have, therefore, once more an incidence of some sort of undefined oral material being used in conjunction with a wide range of written sources to provide a history of a distant, barbarian past. But it is crucial to note that while Jordanes's early history of the Goths and the Trojan narratives about the Franks quite clearly appropriate histories of other people to those of their subjects, Paul does not seem either to turn any kind of Roman past into a Lombard history, nor assimilate to Lombard history narratives about other barbarian peoples. Where he does not use written sources for Lombard history itself, he seems to use them as embellishments (for instance Pliny on geography) or for other subjects (for example, Frankish or Byzantine/East Roman history).⁹⁹

Unlike Jordanes, Paul does not bother to claim dependence on oral tradition for his legendary narratives, but he also does not explicitly claim that written sources are better. He appears to treat oral and written sources quite indiscriminately, and as equal in terms of authority,¹⁰⁰ and all sources serve the same purpose: to portray Lombard history, and to do so in an entertaining manner that does not dwell on possibly disturbing cleavages between past and present and the potentially negative aspects (from a religious perspective) of the founding figures in Lombard history. On reading the *HL*, one does not feel that either Lombard or Roman culture is being forced to fit with the other; the conjoined nature of the historical legacy seems natural in Paul's work. This accords also with what he has to say regarding religious and ethnic difference.

material—or even references to it—survives; the sole vernacular reference to Alboin is in the Anglo-Saxon *Widsith* (70–4), which only provides his name, the fact that he is Audoin's son, rules Italy, and is generous, certainly not anything like the full narrative of his death, which is not even mentioned (on *Widsith*, see further the discussion in Chapter 7). This information in *Widsith* does, however, correspond roughly with what Paul says is contained in Saxon songs (see above), and Paul does not claim the narrative of his death (or the skull-cup) are in them.

98 Thus already Goffart (1988): 425–8.

99 Some examples: *HL*: I,2 (Pliny on geography); *HL*: III,10, III,21 (Frankish history); *HL*: II,2, II, 4, III,12, III, 13, III,15 (Byzantine history).

100 Thus also Bullough (1991): 115; Coumert (2007): 228; 231; 239–40; and Mortensen (1991): 111.

Catholics, Romans, and Lombards in the *Historia Langobardorum*

The ‘national’ histories examined above (Jordanes’s *Getica*, Isidore’s *Historia Gothorum*, Fredegar, and the *Liber Historiae Francorum*) glide over the difference in religion between past and present as quickly as possible; it is barely mentioned and scarcely censured, and in the case of the Gothic histories, blame for the initial conversion to Arianism is placed firmly on the Roman emperor. Paul was aware of these precedents; his own history, however, devotes more space to explicitly religious subjects than do any of the texts examined earlier,¹⁰¹ and he also probably knew at least two histories with a marked religious focus, those of Gregory of Tours and Bede,¹⁰² both of which make it a point to stress the moment of conversion. Moreover, although Isidore and Jordanes seem to downplay religious discontinuity, both certainly stress differences, whether cultural or political, between the Romans and the Goths—as do, albeit to a lesser extent, Fredegar and the *LHF* with regard to the Romans and the Franks. All of these ‘national’ histories also do provide us with a clear—and clearly significant, in one manner or other—conversion moment; indeed, Isidore gives us two. Paul presents a far more ambiguous picture of religious difference and change.¹⁰³

Although the Lombards may well have been Christian, even Catholic, when they first entered Italy, Paul does not say they were; when he mentions Agilulf’s conversion in book IV, he appears to imply that they had been heathen or Arian until Theudelinda’s reign:

101 Some examples: *HL*: I,16 (on Benedict of Nursia); *HL*: II,13 (on Fortunatus, a holy man); *HL*: III,12 (a miracle in Constantinople); *HL*: III,24–26 (the election of Gregory the Great and controversies in the Ravenna Church); *HL*: VI,15 (on Ceodal [Cædwalla], the Anglo-Saxon king who came to Rome to die).

102 An explicit reference to Gregory is at *HL*: III,1; many of Paul’s narratives about Frankish history are drawn from Gregory (e.g. *HL*: III,2; III, 4–8; III,11; III,12). It is possible that Paul only knew an edited version of Gregory’s text, from which much of the religious content had been expunged. Paul’s knowledge of Bede is generally assumed, and given that Bede’s history was disseminated in Francia, it seems to be a reasonable assumption, but there appear to be no clear textual dependencies. *HL*: VI,15 might be a citation from Bede, but it is equally possible that Paul had read the epitaph himself. We should note, however, that like Paul, Bede also includes some poems in his work, normally about religious subjects.

103 As Maya Maskarinec notes, in his *Romana*, Paul similarly presents no real conversion moment with regard to the Roman Empire, even omitting Constantine’s conversion; nevertheless, as with the Lombards in the *HL*, he presents a close bond between Rome and Christianity, although—here even more than is the case with the Lombards—there is always the looming threat of heresy (Maskarinec 2013: 317–19).

Nam pene omnes ecclesiarum substantias Langobardi, cum adhuc gentilitatis errore tenerentur, invaserunt. Sed huius salubri supplicatione rex permotus, et catholicam fidem tenuit, et multas possessiones ecclesiae Christi largitus est atque episcopos, qui in depressione et abiectioe erant, ad dignitatis solitae honorem reduxit.¹⁰⁴

This conversion is a personal one. Unlike the conversions of the Goths in Isidore and Jordanes, and Isidore's narration of the Visigothic conversion to the orthodox faith under Reccared, and equally unlike the story of the conversions of Clovis in Gregory of Tours, or the many royal conversions in Bede, all of which are followed by the conversion of all the people, Paul's narrative says nothing about the broader implications of Agilulf's change of faith (if indeed this is what his words indicate). Rothari—who reigns after Agilulf and Theudelinda—is explicitly said to be Arian, which would suggest that Agilulf's conversion was not like Reccared's in Visigothic Spain in terms of its implications for those he ruled over.¹⁰⁵ Rothari is the only one of the Lombard kings whose religious affiliation is made explicit, and it is remarkable that we are never told, after this, when or whether other kings or the Lombards more generally convert to Catholicism. Paul also tells us that at this point most cities had two bishops, one Arian and one Catholic. We never learn when this ceases to be the case; unlike Isidore, Paul does not care to make it clear when (or even that) the whole kingdom attains the Catholic faith. Despite the taint of Arianism, though, Rothari is depicted in a positive light: surely we cannot view him as being in God's disfavour when we are told that St John protects his ornaments from being plundered from his grave.¹⁰⁶

104 "For the Lombards occupied almost all the property of the churches, as they were still held captive by the error of gentility. But the king [*scil.* Agilulf], moved by her [*scil.* Theudelinda's] salutary entreaty, both maintained the Catholic faith, and bestowed many possessions on the Church of Christ, and led back to the honour of their accustomed dignity the bishops who lived in oppression and humility" (*HL*: IV,6). Although Paul does not say so, Gregory the Great tells us that Authari was Arian, and forbade the Lombards from converting to Catholicism (Ewald and Hartmann, eds 1891–99: I,17); this would suggest either that Paul wrongly attributes heathendom to the Lombards, or that the "error gentilitatis" refers to Arianism. The exact significance of "catholicam fidem tenuit" is unclear: it probably means that Agilulf converted to Catholicism, but the most literal reading could equally be that he was already Catholic and remained so.

105 *HL*: IV,42.

106 *HL*: IV,47. There is no evidence in the *HL* to support Goffart's contention that Rothari "provoked" a kingdom-wide schism, and thus that the Lombards "lapse into the worship of false gods" (Goffart 1988: 404; 399); from Paul's text, it seems logical enough to conclude

If we can assume that before (and probably even after) Theudelinda and Agilulf, the majority of the Lombards (or at least a significant minority) were not Catholic, the positive image of the Arian Rothari has a precedent in the equally positive portrayal of Alboin (whose religion is unknown from Paul's work). We have already witnessed the praise of his military abilities; and as we have seen, in Paul's account, furthermore, Alboin's conquest of Italy appears to be quite peaceful, and is in fact instigated by the Roman general Narses.¹⁰⁷ His entry into Treviso is marked by his generosity to the bishop and the church,¹⁰⁸ although we are told he had vowed to slaughter the people of Pavia because they held out against him for three years, this has nothing to do with religious difference, and on entering the city his horse falls and only gets up when he breaks his vow and promises mercy to the Pavians. As a result, the (Christian) people of Pavia, in Paul's depiction, view Alboin's conquest of their city as a hopeful sign of things changing for the better: we are told that after he enters Pavia,

omnis populus in palatium, quod quondam rex Theudericus construxerat, concurrens, post tantas animum miserias de spe iam fidus coepit ad futura relevare.¹⁰⁹

that there were, after Agilulf's conversion, Arian and Catholic Lombards, and Rothari's Arianism was not a "lapse". I am not aware of any external evidence to support the argument for such a "lapse" rather than what appears in *HL* to be a continuing situation. I also see no textual support for Goffart's view that Agilulf and Theudelinda embody the conversion of the Lombards (Goffart 1988: 395–6); this is dependent on reading Rothari's Arianism as a "lapse". Goffart claims that Paul glides over the conversion because "he did not wish to vie with the enchantments of Bede" (Goffart 1988: 388; similarly 395); the fact that Paul lays no stress on the conversion must have more significance than this, namely that Paul wished to pass over differences and stress continuities. The reason for such a change in emphasis is because Bede was writing an explicitly ecclesiastical history, more interested in the religious past of the Anglo-Saxons, whereas Paul was writing a 'national' history of a more political, and less religious inclination. It is only because of Goffart's belief—naturally impossible to prove—that Paul did not wish to compete with Bede that he is compelled also to suggest that Paul expects readers to know that Agilulf's conversion implies the conversion of all Lombards; if we read Paul as deliberately not stressing the conversion moment as a break with the past because he wishes to highlight continuities, we receive a different picture.

107 Goffart (1988): 389–90. In contrast, cf. Gregory's contemporary account (*DLH* IV.41), which Paul most probably knew. For the depiction of Narses, see below.

108 *HL*: II,12.

109 "All the people came to the palace which king Theoderic had constructed earlier, and after such great hardships, began to ease their minds, now putting their hope in the future" (*HL*: II,27).

As we have seen, Alboin's slayers are killed by the judgement of God; this would appear to confirm the opinion of him as a good king in the eyes of God, who therefore punishes those who plotted against and murdered him. (We are not told how God would have viewed Alboin's crafting of a skull-cup out of a slain opponent.) To be sure, the fact that he could initially vow to slaughter Christians cannot be understood positively, and we are also told that the people of Aquileia feared the barbarity of the Lombards.¹¹⁰ But Alboin retracts his vow; the Christians place their hope in him; and it is far from clear whether the fear of Lombard barbarity is meant to reflect a judgement on Lombard religion, or a fear of violence, or whether it refers rather to their lack of a Roman notion of civilisation. In any case, it seems that such a fear was (in Paul's version at any rate) largely unjustified: the Lombard conquest of Italy is depicted as being peaceful rather than savage.¹¹¹ Thus, though it is certainly true that the 'legendary' narratives regarding Alboin's acquisition of the skull-cup and his queen are tinged with foreboding, and it is also the case that the way Paul structures his stories of Alboin and the aftermath of Alboin's death might indicate some level of discomfort and with this figure, it seems nevertheless fair to say that Alboin, in Paul's presentation, seems to be on balance an overwhelmingly positive character in the history of Lombard history.

Between Alboin and Authari, however, Italy suffers explicitly under Lombard rule. Cleph, the next king, kills many of the Roman nobles; in the interregnum that follows, once again many noble Romans are killed, and under the dukes, churches are despoiled, priests killed, cities demolished, and people murdered.¹¹² In the same period we are given the words of a holy man in Gaul, who says that "increverit malitia eorum in conspectu Domini";¹¹³ this holy man is responsible for a miracle, and we are also told of two "duo duces, qui eum venerabiliter audierunt, incolomes patriae redditi sunt; quidam vero, qui eius verba despexerant, in ipsa Provincia miserabiliter perierunt".¹¹⁴ It seems, therefore, that his condemnation of the Lombards is intended to be taken seriously. All this clearly indicates not just that during this interregnum, Lombards were different from and hostile to the Romans (and, it would appear, more so than

110 *HL*: II,10.

111 As Borri points out, many sixth-century sources appear to share this view of the beginnings of Lombard rule in Italy (Borri 2014: 57–8).

112 *HL*: II,31 (Cleph); II,32 (interregnum).

113 "Their [scil. the Lombards'] evil will grow in the sight of God" (*HL*: III,1).

114 "Two leaders, who listened to him worshipfully returned home unhurt; those, however, who despised his words, perished wretchedly in Provence" (*HL*: III,2). The story is dependent on Gregory of Tours: see *DLH*: VI,6.

during Alboin's rule); their religious status, while not made explicit, is certainly not one of pious Christians behaving in a manner pleasing to God.

With the installation of Authari as king, however, there is a drastic change; under him, we are told that

nulla erat violentia, nullae struebantur insidiae; nemo aliquem iniuste angariabat, nemo spoliabat; non erant furta, non latrocinia; unusquisque quo libebat securus sine timore pergebat.¹¹⁵

We are also told that Authari is the first of the Lombard kings to have the praenomen Flavius;¹¹⁶ this must indicate, in Paul's narrative, the adoption of some level of Roman-ness, which might have been intended partly as a form of rapprochement with the non-Lombard populace.¹¹⁷ From this point, we hear little of Lombard brutality,¹¹⁸ and when Paul mentions Romans, he seems to mean

115 "There was no violence, no plots were hatched; no one unjustly extorted service from another, no one plundered; there were no thefts nor robberies; each one went where he pleased safely and without fear" (*HL*: III,16). This passage should be weighed against Goffart's claim that Agilulf is the real "hero" (Goffart 1988, 397); Paul's suppression of Authari's Arianism (cf. n. 104 above) is also surely a conscious act. Nevertheless, while Paul certainly portrayed Authari in an extremely positive light, it is also true, as Goffart argues, that he explicitly foreshadows Agilulf.

116 *HL*: III,16.

117 Delogu (2004): 105–8.

118 When we do, in the context of the duke Alahis (*HL*: V,38) and the civil strife under Ansprand and Aripert (*HL*: VI,35), it refers not to any lack of Christianity or a targeting of Christians by Lombards in general, but to specific evil rulers, who are probably to be understood as at least nominally Christian and Catholic, though they are not explicitly thus described by Paul. Although we are told, in the context of the report of Pope Gregory's death, that the Lombards were unbelievers and laid waste to the lands everywhere (*HL*: IV,29: "[Langobardi] increduli erant et omnia devastabant"), this seems most likely to refer to the interregnum between Alboin and Authari, and is therefore not an endorsement of Gregory's rather less positive view of the Lombards and even Authari. Note that the only time Paul himself designates a Lombard as barbarian it is with reference to Alahis (Mortensen 1991: 110; on Alahis, cf. Goffart 1988: 412–14); although Lombard barbarity is mentioned at *HL*: II,10, this is presented as the Aquileian view of the Lombards, and we cannot know if Paul endorses it. In contrast, various northern peoples are explicitly called barbarians (*HL*: I,1; 4; 5), as are the Avars (*HL*: IV,37). The one example of a reference to post-Authari Lombard brutality against Christians is a surprising instance of Lombards plundering Monte Cassino during Agilulf's reign (*HL*: IV,17); it is far from clear that this episode has any basis in history, and it might have been inserted in order to make Benedict's prophecy (reported in the same chapter) come true. Paul's editors believe that the plunder occurred in an earlier period (Bethmann and Waitz, eds 1878: 122, n. 1). We

almost exclusively the Italians still under Byzantine rule, but not Italians under Lombard rule.¹¹⁹

After Authari's death, but while Theudelinda is still queen, we are told of the cooperation between her and Gregory the Great;¹²⁰ from a religious perspective, this is clearly a high point in Lombard history. In terms of religious values, there does seem to be some kind of progression, however interrupted, between the good kings of the past and the rule of Liutprand, the last king in the *HL*. Alboin is praised, and was an ally of a 'good' Roman, Narses (see below); Authari kept his kingdom prosperous and peaceful (and brought to the Lombards the good queen Theudelinda); Agilulf and Theudelinda were (perhaps) responsible for converting some (or most) of the Lombards to Catholicism and worked closely with the pope; the tomb of the Arian Rothari is protected by no less a saint than John the Baptist. In Paul's own lifetime, Liutprand actually protects the pope from the Romans (Byzantines):¹²¹ by this point, the Romans (Byzantines) are iconoclasts and no longer maintain the Catholic faith, and the Lombard king seems to have attained fully the mantle earlier reserved for the Romans, protecting the pope from Byzantine attack.¹²² The only period of Lombard history that seems to be condemned on religious grounds is therefore one in which there were no kings; this moral disorder can be blamed not necessarily on a Lombard lack of religion or civilisation per se,

should note, though, that at *HL*: I,20, Paul refers to a barbarian language ("barbaricus sermo"), by which he seems to mean the language of the Lombards; it is unclear whether any sort of cultural or religious value-judgement is implied, or whether the term simply designates the vernacular, as seems to be the case in Einhard's work from a generation later (see Chapter 7 for discussion of Einhard's usage).

119 Because Paul's narrative is about Italy and indeed about the city of Rome, and distinguishes (as we shall see) between the populations of both city and peninsula and the people of the surviving Roman Empire in the east, in the following I also use the anachronistic terms 'Byzantine' and 'Byzantium' to distinguish between Italians/citizens of the city of Rome, and the empire and its people properly referred to in contemporary terms as Rome and Romans. As Maskarinec (2013) points out, while the different meanings of the term 'Roman'—pertaining to the city, to Italy or other imperial provinces, and to the empire now ruled from Constantinople—were not new, by Paul's time the disjuncture between these meanings was. On these issues, see further below at n. 130.

120 *HL*: IV,8–9.

121 *HL*: VI,49.

122 I follow here the arguments of Alfonsi (1975): 11–12; 15–18, though he overstates the case somewhat with regard to the Lombards becoming "gli eredi della civiltà antica" under Authari (Alfonsi 1975: 15). There is little rhetoric of 'barbarism' and 'civilisation' in Paul's text. Cf. Goffart (1988): 419–23, for a more nuanced reading of Paul's depiction of Liutprand's reign.

but rather on a brief period of political turmoil.¹²³ Insofar as there is a judgment implicit in the narrative of this period, it might best be understood as a statement regarding the importance of stable kingship, rather than having to do with moral decay because of incorrect religious beliefs or practices. This view is surely supported by the fact that Authari's religion is not mentioned, and Paul is silent regarding Pope Gregory's condemnation of him and his Arianism.

Religious difference is thus not given much importance in Paul's Lombard history; nor is ethnic difference between Lombards and Romans. Certainly, in Paul's depiction of the aftermath of Alboin's death, there is a clear divide between the two groups. However, the Lombard–Roman relationship seems to be, at least initially, one between allies: we are told that “*Omni tempore quo Langobardi Pannoniam possederunt, Romanae rei publicae adversus aemulos adiutores fuerunt*.”¹²⁴ The Lombards enter Italy, in fact, when the Romans have lost their legitimacy, in a manner of speaking, by betraying Narses, who receives great praise from Paul. Narses is described thus:

Erat autem vir piissimus, in religione catholicus, in pauperes munificus, in recuperandis basilicis satis studiosus, vigiliis et orationibus in tantum studens, ut plus supplicationibus ad Deum profusis quam armis bellicis victoriam obtineret.¹²⁵

Because of his successes in Italy, he excites the envy of the Roman (that is, Constantinopolitan or Byzantine) court, and the plotting of its courtiers brings

123 As we saw above, the interregnum is caused, ultimately, by Alboin's skull-cup and his provocation with it of Rosamund. But if Paul had wished to condemn Alboin from a religious standpoint, he could surely have done so explicitly; it is difficult to find any censure in Paul's text. We can only conclude that while Alboin's conduct might be portrayed, through the structure of the text, as the cause of this interregnum, he is nevertheless intended to be understood at worst as a slightly ambivalent character, but was supposed to be seen for the most part as a positive figurehead of the Lombard past. A certain element of wonder at his greatness and reverence for him as the leader of the Lombards into Italy, as evidenced even in the preservation of the material evidence of the story—the skull-cup—also cannot be denied.

124 “During the whole period in which the Lombards held Pannonia, they were allies of Rome against her rivals” (*HL*: 11,1).

125 “He was the most pious of men, Catholic in religion, generous to the poor, sufficiently zealous in restoring churches, [and] so fervent in vigils and prayers, that he obtained victory more by the outpouring of prayers to God than by military weapons” (*HL*: 11,3).

about his downfall.¹²⁶ Given the description of Narses cited above, we must be meant to think that those working against him are reprehensible, and therefore his allies—the Lombards—are to be viewed positively. This impression is only strengthened by the fact that those very Romans who plot against the good Narses end up being depicted as enemies of the Lombards for the next two centuries, and thus not in a very positive light.¹²⁷ It is in reaction to the machinations against him at Constantinople that Narses invites the Lombards into Italy: they come not to replace the Romans as an ethnic group, but as a new political power installed by a man praised for his religious virtues.¹²⁸ In this way, the depiction of the Lombard arrival in Italy prefigures the later conjunction of Lombards and (Italian) Romans, both in terms of religion, and with regard to ethnicity and politics.¹²⁹

Once the Lombards are in Italy, apart from the brief period between the reigns of Alboin and Authari, we hear little of any kind of conflict between (non-Byzantine) Romans and the Lombards. Even after Authari's rule there are often wars between Lombards and Byzantines, but the native population under Lombard rule are not depicted as being different in any way from the Lombards. 'Romanus', used as a substantive (e.g. 'bellum contra Romanos' or 'civitas/regnum Romanorum'), refers exclusively to the parts and people of Italy under Byzantine rule; used as an adjective (e.g. 'Romana ecclesia'; 'pontifex Romanus'), it refers to the city, people, pope, and Church of Rome itself (portrayed much more positively than the other group of Romans).¹³⁰ It is impossible to assume that we should believe from this that all the native population

126 *HL*: II,5.

127 Maskarinec also correctly contrasts the positive description of Narses with the negative image presented of the emperor Justin II (Maskarinec 2013: 329–30; with reference to *HL*: III,II).

128 Similarly Delogu (2004): 130–1.

129 Alfonsi (1975): 11–12; 16–18.

130 Passages where 'Roman' is synonymous with 'Byzantine': *HL*: III,12; III,13; III,19 (the sole occurrence of an adjectival use referring to Byzantine Romans); IV,3; IV,8; IV,10 [?]; IV,12; IV,16; IV,28; IV,32; IV,33; IV,34; IV,36; IV,38; IV,42; IV,45; V,11; V,27; V,28; V,30; VI,11; VI,12; VI,27; VI,40; VI,44; VI,49; VI,51; VI,54; VI,56.

Passages where 'Roman' means 'of the city of Rome': *HL*: III,20; III,26; IV,5; IV,36; V,11; V,31; VI,4; VI,6; VI,29; VI,34 [?]; VI,36; VI,40; VI,43; VI,49.

HL: IV,22 refers to Lombards adopting a form of dress from the Romans, by which Byzantines could be meant, but the term more likely indicates the inhabitants of Italy among whom the Lombards lived.

At *HL*: V,37, Cunicpert has an affair with a girl "ex nobilissimo Romanorum genere ortam"; the usage suggests that though she lived in Lombard territory, she was of a Byzantine noble family.

of those areas under Lombard rule were descendants of the Lombard invaders and the rest had been exterminated; Paul's usage seems to imply, rather, that he did not perceive or wish to express a clear ethnic difference among the peoples under Lombard rule.¹³¹

The exact mechanism of settlement is not really pertinent to my purposes (which is why I do not here cite *HL*: 111,16, since it does not refer explicitly to a native and necessarily Roman or non-Lombard population).¹³² What is important is that Paul nowhere gives us to understand that all the Romans on Lombard-controlled land had been exterminated; the fact that he ceases to refer to Romans except for those who are under Roman (= Byzantine) rule therefore suggests either that he perceives no necessary ethnic difference (or grants it no significance), or that he uses the term 'Roman' solely as a political one. Given the mixed ethnic composition even of Alboin's followers into Italy in Paul's own terms, the latter interpretation seems most plausible.¹³³ As in

These passages are also collated and briefly discussed by Maskarinec (2013): 333–4; cf. already Ghosh (2009): 133–4, not cited by Maskarinec. As Maskarinec points out, Paul increasingly uses the term 'Greci' to refer to the (Byzantine) Romans, though this term does not completely displace 'Romani'; they are, moreover, once characterised as a "per-fida gens" (*HL*: v,8), two terms that had been used by Romans in antiquity of barbarians (Maskarinec 2013: 326–8; 331; 335; 342). On the connotations of the term 'Grecus' in the Latin writings of this period, see further Gantner (2013); and more broadly on negative portrayals of Byzantium in the west, see Wickham (1998).

131 Delogu (2004): 132–3; Pohl (2000b): 26. In this context, the controversial passage in which Paul actually refers to the Romans in the Lombard territories is of little assistance: he tells us that because of Lombard avarice, many of the Roman nobles were killed in the interregnum between Alboin and Authari: ("multi nobilium Romanorum ob cupiditatem interfecti sunt": *HL*: 11,32); he also refers to the "reliqui" who were made "tributarii". (It is not clear whether the latter are the remaining nobles—which would seem to be the logical interpretation—or the non-noble native people of Italy.)

132 Cf. the literature cited at n. 7 for discussion of these passages.

133 The key passage in this context is *HL*: 11,26: "Certum est autem, tunc Alboin multos secum ex diversis, quas vel alii reges vel ipse ceperat, gentibus ad Italiam adduxisse. Unde usque hodie eorum in quibus habitant vicos Gepidos, Vulgares, Sarmatas, Pannonios, Suavos, Noricos, sive alii huiusmodi nominibus appellamus" ("It is certain, however, that Alboin at that time led in many [people] of different peoples into Italy, whom either he or other kings had obtained as followers. Therefore even today we call their towns in which they live Gepid, Vulgar, Sarmatian, Pannonian, Sueve, or Norican towns, or by other such names"); cf. also *HL*: 11,6–8. The Saxons who accompany Alboin into Italy (*HL*: 11,6) have to leave because they are not permitted to live under their own laws by the Lombards (*HL*: 111,6: "Sed neque eis a Langobardis permissum est in proprio iure subsistere, ideoque aestimantur ad suam patriam repedasse": "But it was not permitted to them by the Lombards to remain in their own law, and therefore they decided to return to their own homeland");

Isidore's Spain, Rome and Romans had been existing realities as opponents of the Lombard polity in Italy in Paul's lifetime; unlike Isidore, though, Paul does not distinguish between Romans and Lombards under Lombard rule. In Paul's history, political unity appears to extinguish ethnic distinctions.¹³⁴

Of the histories considered thus far, Paul's seems to be the most eclectic. Jordanes and Isidore focus exclusively on the Goths; Fredegar certainly has a lot of stories about others, but increasingly narrows his focus; the *LHF* also concentrates on one people only. The three 'national' histories follow a more or less linear narrative of secular history from origins to the present. Paul, on the other hand, presents many more digressions: he gives us a fair amount of ecclesiastical history; and apart from his narrative about the Lombards, he inserts a number of episodes concerning the Franks, and also some amount of Byzantine history. In this case, there does not appear to be any effort, or even any perceived need, to integrate non-Roman and Roman, non-Christian and Christian heritages: Paul seems not to see the difference, and therefore any need explicitly to bridge it.

Nevertheless, one point must be stressed: Paul knew of the Frankish Trojan origin myth;¹³⁵ and the Lombards were not in a region simply neighbouring

the other ethnic groups manifestly did not leave, at least in Paul's narrative. This suggests that for Paul, living under one set of laws was key to unity of some sort, and thus Lombard identity might have indicated legal and political unity, with ethnic difference being of less significance.

134 Maskarinec points out that Paul's *Romana* modifies Eutropius to stress that the Roman people came into being through a process of unifying different peoples (Maskarinec 2013: 305–10; 312–13). She believes that the fact that distinct ethnic groups remained within the Lombard kingdom (see previous note) distinguishes the Lombards from the Romans, as under the Lombards, other ethnic groups remained distinct, whereas the Romans were unique because the various groups from which they emerged coalesced into one entity (Maskarinec 2013: 312). However, the fact that the Saxons left because they could not live under their own laws suggests that the other groups did live under the same law as the Lombards, and thus the Lombards achieved one aspect of unification similar to the Roman achievement, that of law. Moreover, the (Italian) Romans and Lombards also appear to live within one polity without friction. Thus it seems to me that in fact Paul's depiction Lombard Italy (at least in the *HL*) actually presents the Lombards as being similar, even akin to—and as rulers of Italy, therefore appropriate successors of—the Roman people in terms of the way in which many groups could be unified into one polity by a single law. This point is indeed supported by Maskarinec's own argument that from the time of the Lombard conquest of Italy, the remaining Roman (Byzantine) empire is now presented increasingly like a kingdom rather than the Roman Empire, and just one of many Mediterranean regional powers (Maskarinec 2013: 327).

135 *HL*: VI, 23.

the core of the ancient Roman Empire: they had occupied and now ruled over that very core. Despite this, the Lombards are not given an origin in Troy, but in Scandinavia. This can only be a result of a conscious choice, and given that Paul retains the story of the naming of the Lombards despite his expressed disdain for it, this choice must have been made not just to satisfy an audience, but also because locating the Lombards in Scandinavia potentially gave their distant past some sort of independence from other historical traditions: those of the Romans, to be sure, but equally those of the new rulers when Paul composed his text, the Franks.¹³⁶ Given Paul's effort to show that Lombards had different origins from the Romans, it is of no little significance that the Franks and the Romans, in Frankish narratives that Paul knew, shared a very similar origin; that the Lombards do not also share this distant past is thus probably a statement not just about how the Lombards were distinct from the Romans, but also how they differed from the Franks.

From reading Paul, we do not get any sense of a continuing conflict—whether political, or with regard to culture and heritage—between Lombards and Romans (that is to say, non-Lombard Italians in the Lombard kingdoms). Unlike Jordanes and Isidore, Paul appears not to have perceived any need to effect some sort of rapprochement between different cultural milieux through his narrative: the two cultures had merged sufficiently to make it unnecessary to belabour the point of cultural conjunction. A Lombard history in Latin does not, one gets the impression, call for any particular comment: there seems to be nothing at all extraordinary about a history of Lombards that includes a time when they were not Catholic, draws on oral sources and presents much legendary material of dubious moral value (from a strictly ecclesiastical standpoint), but also includes religious history, and is written in Latin.

Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* represents, I suggest, the maturation of a process that we saw beginning with Jordanes: by his period, the integration of the various cultural elements encompassed by the Lombard polity—pagan and Arian pasts; a few surviving fragments of a Germanic language; the Catholic history of Italy; Latin, Roman history; the history of the Lombard kingdom and duchies—had in fact meshed into a coherent whole, which allowed Paul to present Lombard history without breaks and discontinuities. This treatment of the pre-Christian, barbarian, past as continuous with a present

136 As Lars Boje Mortensen has suggested, one of the distinguishing aspects of the Scandinavian past is that, in Jordanes's chronology, it reached rather further back than the Roman past, making peoples coming from Scandinavia potentially more prestigious because of their antiquity: Mortensen (1991): 94–5; see also the discussion of Isidore's presentation of Gothic origins, to a similar effect, in Chapter 2 at nn. 126–8.

that had adopted many characteristics of ‘Romanitas’—the Latin language; aspects of the legal and administrative traditions; and perhaps most importantly, the Christian religion of the Roman Church—became the norm for the later ‘national’ histories of the middle ages.

The next such histories (from the continent) to present the kind of detailed narrative of the distant, pre-Christian, barbarian past that we have examined above are Widukind of Corvey’s Saxon history and Dudo of St Quentin’s Norman history; like the *HL*, these texts depict a largely seamless continuity between pagan, ‘barbarian’ pasts and the Christian, Latinate present. Widukind’s present was that of a Saxon king becoming Roman emperor, and the history of his people is composed in fluent, classicising, Sallust-inspired Latin; but it begins with a narrative of migration (possibly from Scandinavia, possibly from Macedonia¹³⁷) and legendary stories of a pagan people.¹³⁸ Dudo writes about a people who in fact *did* come from Scandinavia; but he also does not provide us simply with ‘Germanic’ origins: his Normans trace their lineage back through the Danes to Troy.¹³⁹ The strategies used by these two writers are certainly not identical to what we see in the *HL*; and their contexts—writing about peoples who had never been in much contact with Rome, and in the case of the Saxons still inhabited regions that had largely been outside the bounds of the empire, rather than, as in Paul’s case, at its heart—were very different from that of Paul the Deacon. It is striking nevertheless that we find in Widukind and Dudo something of a synthesis of the approaches witnessed in the Frankish and Lombard histories discussed above. There is no direct link between Paul’s work and the later ‘national’ histories; but the *HL* has an important place as, arguably, the first of the many such histories of Latin Christian Europe that manages to present in the most successful manner so far a largely de-problematized and unified version of what can often, from a modern point of view, seem to be highly problematic and conflicting pasts.

137 As we shall see in Chapter 7, this fusion of the two possibilities had already been essayed by ninth-century Frankish writers with regard to their own past.

138 Hirsch and Lohmann (eds 1935): I, 2; I, 12.

139 Lair (ed. 1865): I, 1–2.

A 'Germanic' Hero in Latin and the Vernacular: *Waltharius* and *Waldere*

Thus far, I have examined narrative prose histories in Latin that have uncertain connections, at best, to any kind of poetic oral tradition, and might not draw on any such traditions at all. In each case, the texts or portions of texts analysed were concerned specifically with the past of a single people, and with all the necessary caution required for such terminology, they can be called 'national' histories, in that they were clearly composed to put forth a history of a particular people with which the putative audience had a definite and continuing sense of affinity and identification.

In the following three chapters, the focus shifts to poetic narratives, in Latin and the vernacular, all of which appear to have links to oral traditions in the Germanic vernaculars, and none of which are devoted to the past of a single people: the Latin epic *Waltharius* and the two Old English *Waldere* fragments that treat of the same material as the Latin poem; the Old English epic *Beowulf*; and three short poems: the Old English *Deor* and *Widsith*, and the Old High German *Hildebrandslied*.¹ These narratives, even if they might have been valued by the peoples who were their audiences, cannot really be thought of as presenting very much that any audience might have identified with as specifically 'our' history in an ethnic or national sense, as was the case with the Latin prose narratives examined in the previous chapters. These texts constitute the surviving corpus of heroic literature from the early middle ages that deals with what has been thought of as a 'Germanic' past; they are also the only poetic texts from this period that treat of the distant past in which that past cannot (for the most part) be derived from biblical, Roman or Greek history.²

1 *Beowulf* is the subject of the following chapter; the shorter poems and their contexts are discussed in Chapter 7.

2 We should note, though, that all of these texts date, at least in their current form, from the eighth century or later, and few would argue that even an original oral form of any of them was extant before the seventh century. The distant past was now the 'Völkerwanderungszeit', and these works are not concerned with the origins (nor indeed the migrations) of any peoples; nor, to the extent that the characters in these works can be placed in an actual historical context, do they tell of a time before the last years of Rome, when there had already been more or less extensive contact between Rome and the Germanic-speaking peoples of Europe for at least a century. Both *Beowulf* and *Widsith* do include some reference to the biblical past,

All of these works have been claimed by literary scholars as representing survivals of Germanic oral tradition, and it has been argued that they were valued precisely because they presented some sort of common 'Germanic' heritage that their audiences identified with, even though it was not a tradition specifically of their own people. As we have seen, some portions of the prose histories of Jordanes and Paul the Deacon examined above have also been claimed as embodiments of 'Germanic' tradition, but such claims are, to say the least, exaggerated; I shall argue that even with regard to the poetic texts examined below, it is far from clear whether the distant past portrayed in any of them was perceived to be specifically 'Germanic', or barbarian, or non-Christian. Moreover, although I do not dispute that all of these poems draw in some manner on oral poetic traditions in the Germanic vernaculars, their relationship to Christian, Latin, and Roman written traditions also needs to be stressed, and the extent, nature, and function of the connection with any Germanic oral tradition deserves critical scrutiny.

These texts, unlike the subjects of the previous chapters, have rarely been examined from a historical perspective—they are seen as 'literature', as opposed to 'history'. Nevertheless, as I argued in the introduction, they are no less windows into the historical consciousness of this period than the Latin prose histories we have already examined. The study of these narratives alongside those discussed above is thus of some use for our understanding of early medieval historical consciousness, not least because both sets of texts appear to have some elements in common in terms of their approach to what we might perceive as uncomfortable breaks in the histories of the successor kingdoms to the Roman empire in the west, and of the peoples who inhabited them.

In the present chapter, I provide an examination of *Waltharius* and *Waldere*. After an introductory section surveying the historical and literary background to these texts, in the three substantive sections of this chapter, I shall argue that while there is certainly a connection with Germanic poetic traditions, a deep influence of Christian tradition is equally perceptible. Furthermore, *Waltharius* is an example of secular matter, possibly drawing on heroic vernacular narratives of some sort, being transformed into Latin entertainment; the existence of this text shows that secular versions of the distant past that did not concord with written, Latin histories, and were transmitted in an oral and vernacular form, were accessible and of some interest to Latin-educated, literate elites as well, who may well have been clerics.

and *Widsith* also to the Greek and Roman pasts; non-Roman and non-biblical figures, however, are most prominent in both works.

***Waltharius* and *Waldere*: Authorship, Content, and Historical Background**

From our period, narratives regarding the Aquitanian warrior *Waltharius* or *Waldere* survive only in two Old English fragments (known as *Waldere I* and *Waldere II*), both pieces of dialogue; and in the Latin poem known as *Waltharius*. The Old English text is written on two leaves of parchment, which cannot be connected in any way with any extant manuscripts; in its present form, the poem has been dated to between 950 and 1050.³ Apart from one tenth-century manuscript, the extant witnesses for the Latin text are from the eleventh century and afterward; the poem is thought to have been composed at some point between c.800 and c.1000.⁴ Nothing is known about the author of the *Waldere*; what little we can claim truly to know about the author of *Waltharius* derives from the text's preface, which might, however, be a later addition. According to this preface, the poem was composed by a certain Geraldus for a bishop Erckambald; neither can be identified.⁵ Another possibility is that it was written by Ekkehard I of St Gall (died 973), who is said, in the *Casus Sancti Galli* composed by his namesake Ekkehard IV, to have written a *vita Waltharii manu fortis*;⁶ some scholars have identified this work with *Waltharius*.⁷ *Waltharius* is composed in elegant Latin hexameters, clearly deeply influenced by Virgil and Prudentius, and its composition belongs without doubt to a learned, possibly monastic context.

After the preface and a geographical and ethnographical introduction,⁸ the poet tells us how Attila, king of the Huns, mobilises his armies against the nations of

3 Zettersten (ed. 1979): 6–11.

4 Views on the dating of *Waltharius* diverge strongly; the interpretation proposed below would, however, be valid for any of the dates proposed, and thus the question of the date is left aside in what follows. The prominent early daters are Peter Dronke and Alf Önnarfors: Dronke (1977): 66–79; Dronke (1984); Önnarfors (1979); Önnarfors (1988). Jacobsen (2002) suggests a date before 915, but is not more specific. The prominent late daters are Karl Langosch and Dieter Schaller: Langosch (1989–90); Schaller (1983); Schaller (1989–90). For the most recent survey of the debates regarding the date, see Stone (2013): 54–6.

5 The preface is in only four manuscripts (Strecker 1951: 12); that it was a part of the poem and written by the author has been doubted because of Ekkehard IV's testimony in his *Casus Sancti Galli* (composed in the mid-eleventh century). Cf. the works cited above (n. 4) for discussion regarding the value of Ekkehard's statement.

6 Haefele (ed. and trans. 2002): c. 80.

7 The most recent summaries of arguments regarding authorship are given in Stone (2013): 54–6, and Ziolkowski (2008): 193–4.

8 *Waltharius*: 1–10.

Europe. In the following hundred lines, we learn how the kings of the Franks, Burgundians, and Aquitanians make peace by providing hostages in the form of the Burgundian princess Hiltgunt and the Aquitanian prince Waltharius;⁹ the Frankish prince Guntharius is of too tender an age to be without his mother,¹⁰ and Hagano, a young nobleman specifically said to be of Trojan extraction, is sent in his stead.¹¹ The hostages are treated well and educated at Attila's court, but after some years, the Frankish king Gibicho dies, and Guntharius breaks the peace treaty with the Huns; as a consequence of this, Hagano flees the Hunnish court, and makes his way back to the Frankish kingdom.¹² There is no reprisal of any sort; one might assume that Hunnic power was waning, though no such weakening is explicitly mentioned, and in fact we are soon told of the Huns' continued ferocity in battle—though now under the command of Waltharius, not Attila.¹³

Waltharius is shown to have great prowess as a warrior and commander as he leads the Huns into battle. The first war is waged against a recently conquered (but unnamed) people that now resists the Huns and frequently wages war against them;¹⁴ since we learn later that the current Frankish king, Guntharius, had never seen Waltharius in battle,¹⁵ it is apparent that these opponents could not have been the Franks. Although the Huns under Waltharius win what appears to be a famous triumph,¹⁶ there is no celebration on their return. Waltharius goes alone to the royal quarters and finds Hiltgunt there; they confess their love for each other and make a plan to steal some treasure, dupe the Huns, and escape from Pannonia.¹⁷ As planned with Hiltgunt, Waltharius arranges a party for the court, at which he contrives to get all the Huns too drunk to move; Hiltgunt, in the meantime, fills two chests with treasures, and as the Huns are sleeping off their drink, the betrothed couple steals off into the night.¹⁸ We have to wonder just how tongue-in-cheek were the remarks at the beginning of the text regarding the fierce Huns and their thousand-year rule,¹⁹ when we read the following passages, describing Attila's

9 *Waltharius*: 11–115.

10 *Waltharius*: 29–30.

11 *Waltharius*: 28–9; note that the epithet Trojan is never used of anyone also said to be from the Frankish royal family.

12 *Waltharius*: 116–20.

13 *Waltharius*: 174–214.

14 *Waltharius*: 170–3.

15 *Waltharius*: 620.

16 *Waltharius*: 209–13.

17 *Waltharius*: 221–86.

18 *Waltharius*: 288–357.

19 *Waltharius*: 6–10.

hangover, his helplessness and inactivity, and the Huns' refusal to pursue a single runaway hostage.²⁰

Waltharius and Hiltgunt make their way unmolested, travelling by night, the virtuous Waltharius refraining from enjoying carnal relations with his betrothed.²¹ They eventually reach the borders of the Frankish kingdom, and when this is made known at the Frankish court, Hagano recognises Waltharius from the way he is described, and is delighted that his old companion has escaped.²² Guntharius is delighted too, but for a different reason: he wants to get his hands on the treasure Waltharius bears, claiming that it is what was taken (by Attila) from his father, and thus rightfully belongs to him.²³ Although Hagano advises against it,²⁴ the Franks get ready to fight Waltharius and strip him of his hoard.

There follows an extended description of a series of battles between Waltharius and several Frankish warriors: Guntharius first sends his men to demand both Waltharius's treasures and Hiltgunt,²⁵ and when Waltharius refuses, one after another, the Franks approach Waltharius, exchange insults, fight, and are defeated.²⁶ By the time we have finished with two-thirds of the text, all of Guntharius's warriors are dead except for Hagano; the last third of the narrative is devoted to a dialogue between Guntharius and Hagano as the king tries to persuade Hagano to fight, and to the battle between them and Waltharius and its aftermath. The last fight is described in rather more detail than the ones that preceded it.²⁷ It is notable, though, that Guntharius—who, we should recall, was too tender to be sent away from his mother as hostage—is utterly ineffective as a warrior: his lance-throw is easily shaken off by Waltharius, and the king, who wanted to seize Waltharius's treasure, is shown in a comic moment trying to creep up to Waltharius under cover of a diversion created by Hagano to recover his own lance—an operation he is

20 *Waltharius*: 362–4 (hangover); 380–99 (helplessness); 408–18 (refusal to pursue).

21 *Waltharius*: 419–27.

22 *Waltharius*: 464–8.

23 *Waltharius*: 469–72.

24 *Waltharius*: 478–9; 487–8.

25 It is apparent that Guntharius wants not just the material goods (treasure and horse) but also Hiltgunt: all three are demanded at *Waltharius*: 602; 819. In addition, Hiltgunt appears confident that she is one of the prizes for the Franks: *Waltharius*: 542–6.

26 The motif of single combat is common to heroic epic in most languages, but also occurs in Prudentius, where the combat is between personified vices and virtues; see Strecker's apparatus, and Katscher (1973) on Prudentius; see also Oakley (1985) on the evidence for historical incidences of single combat in ancient Rome.

27 Useful analyses of the last fight are given by Katscher (1973): 99–104, and Wolf (1976).

unable to carry out. In fact, he is narrowly saved from death at Waltharius's hand by Hagano's intervention, and is left scarcely fit to stand, shaking in shock.²⁸

The battle ends in a most unusual manner, with no resolution and rather an anticlimax. Waltharius lops off Guntharius's lower leg, knee included; as the king collapses, Hagano comes to protect him from the death-blow, placing himself between Waltharius's sword and Guntharius.²⁹ Waltharius is, we are told, unable to stop his hand, which is already extended to strike Guntharius;³⁰ but his sword only strikes Hagano's helmet, and breaks on impact.³¹ Waltharius is so enraged by this that he throws away even the hilt of his sword, and such is his fury that he extends his arm too far out of the safety of his shield when tossing his hilt away, and Hagano chops off his hand.³² Undaunted, Waltharius sticks the stub of his right arm into his shield and with his left hand pulls out his short sword and slices off the right side of Hagano's face, eye and molars included.³³ "*Tali negotio dirimuntur proelia facto*".³⁴ The hand, the eye, and the foot lie on the ground staring up at the warriors: "*Sic, sic armillas partiti sunt Avares*!"³⁵

Waltharius calls out to Hiltgunt to come and bind their wounds,³⁶ and when this is done, he asks her to serve the wine: first to Hagano, who is a good warrior, then to himself, who had to endure more than the others,³⁷ and finally to Guntharius, who is a useless warrior.³⁸ As the alcohol gets to them, Hagano and Waltharius indulge in a bit of light-hearted banter about their newly altered physical states,³⁹ and then they renew their bond,⁴⁰ lift up the still incapable and suffering Guntharius on his shield, set him on his horse, and go off, each on their own way, the Franks to Worms, and Waltharius to Aquitaine.⁴¹ Waltharius

28 *Waltharius*: 1313–32.

29 *Waltharius*: 1363–70.

30 *Waltharius*: 1371: "*Extensam cohibere manum non quiverat heros*".

31 *Waltharius*: 1372–5.

32 *Waltharius*: 1376–82.

33 *Waltharius*: 1386–5.

34 "With all this having been done, the battle ended" (*Waltharius*: 1396).

35 "Thus were the arm-rings of the Avars distributed!" (*Waltharius*: 1404) (the Huns are frequently called Avars in this poem; see further below at n. 57).

36 *Waltharius*: 1407–8.

37 *Waltharius*: 1412: "*reliquis qui plus toleravi*".

38 *Waltharius*: 1410–15.

39 *Waltharius*: 1421–42.

40 *Waltharius*: 1443: "*His dictis pactum renovant*".

41 *Waltharius*: 1443–6.

and Hiltgunt marry, and after the death of his father, Waltharius rules his people for thirty years.⁴²

The Old English *Waldere* fragments are clearly about the same story; although some differences are discernible even from the few lines we have, there is too little evidence to make much of a judgement about the general thrust of the narrative or its function. Fragment I consists almost in its entirety (31 lines) of a speech (only the first half-line is not a part of this speech) encouraging the (leading-)warrior of Attila,⁴³ the son of Ælfhere, not to lose heart and to fight against Ʒuðhere, “ðæs ðe he ðas beaduwe onzan / mid unryhte ærest secan”.⁴⁴ We are told that “Forsoc he ðam swurde ond ðam syncfatum, / beaza mænigo”,⁴⁵ and will therefore have to lose the battle and seek a lord, or die.⁴⁶ Ælfhere's son, it is reasonably supposed, must be an equivalent to Waltharius; as in the Latin poem, he is the leading warrior of Attila, and fights against Ʒuðhere, cognate with Guntharius, who has refused his offer of treasures. The speaker in *Waldere I* must be Hiltgunt (assuming that the narrative framework is the same as in the Latin poem). We should note that regardless of what the rest of the lost Old English poem might have been like, from this speech alone Hiltgunt can be seen to have had a larger role—or at least a more significant speaking part—than in the Latin text.⁴⁷ While I am not sure this amounts to taking over the role of a senior member of a ‘comitatus’,⁴⁸ it certainly gives her far more prominence than in the Latin text, though the reason for her long speech—that, ultimately, if she cannot successfully get Waltharius to fight and win, she herself is lost to the enemy—exists in *Waltharius* too.

Waldere II is rather more confusing, and more allusive to a wider world of legend. There are references to ðeodric, Widia, Niðhad, and Weland (who is

42 *Waltharius*: 1447–50.

43 *Waldere I*: 6a: “Ætlan ordwyȝa”. Cf. *Waltharius*: 126–8, where Attila's wife calls Waltharius the “imperii columna [...] in quo magna potestatis vis extitit huius” (“the pillar of the empire [...], which contains the great strength of this power”); at 378 he is called “lux Pannoniae” (“light of Pannonia”).

44 “...because he first began to seek strife without right” (*Waldere I*: 26b–7; Ælfhere and Ʒuðhere are named at *Waldere I*: 11 and 25). Note that in both versions the Guntharius/Ʒuðhere figure seeks battle against what is right.

45 “...he [Ʒuðhere] forsook the sword and the treasures, many rings” (*Waldere I*: 28–9a).

46 *Waldere I*: 30–1.

47 Note also that the female figures of Guðrún/Kriemhild and Brynhild in the Norse and German versions of the Burgundian legend (which include much the same cast of characters as in *Waltharius*) have very prominent roles indeed, and are far from passive figures, unlike Hiltgunt in *Waltharius*.

48 Schwab (1979): 245.

also referred to in *Waldere I*), all known from other vernacular narratives in the Germanic languages; a reference to Weland occurs also in *Waltharius*, but the Latin text betrays no knowledge of these other figures.⁴⁹ It begins with a speech by someone who is obviously opposed to Waldere, and this is followed by Waldere's own rejoinder, in which he mentions that his interlocutor, the lord or friend of the Burgundians, thought that Hagen would have managed to end the battle.⁵⁰ Putting the two fragments together makes it all the more apparent that we are dealing with the same story as in the Latin; the Old English version even has the format of abusive speech between warriors before they fight.⁵¹ As in the Latin text, there are allusions both to the mythological figure of Weland the Smith, who was a character only of Germanic mythology, and to the legend of the Burgundian kings; Ʒuðhere is here a Burgundian,⁵² as he is in all other extant material; in *Waltharius* Guntharius is a Frank. The ðeodric of *Waldere II* is most likely connected to the Ostrogothic king Theoderic of Italy, whom we have already encountered in a non-Gothic context in the seventh-century Latin Fredegar chronicle, and who crops up again in *Deor*, the *Hildebrandslied*, and (possibly) *Widsith*. These texts are discussed in Chapter 7 below; at present, we need to note only that *Waldere II*, like the three short vernacular poems and also *Beowulf*, evokes a wider world of past kings of Germanic-speaking peoples who were unrelated to each other and to the audience of this text, and—whatever their afterlife might have been in the Christian conception—manifestly enjoyed quite an afterlife in narrative form.

49 *Waltharius*: 965. On Theoderic, see further Chapter 7; on Weland—with whom Widia and Niðhad tend to be linked in the later legendary matter—see the references at n. 116 below.

50 *Waldere II*: 14: “wine Burzenda”. Cf. *Atlaqviða*: 16,3, where—if we follow the manuscript—the Huns are referred to as “vinir Burgunda”; this makes sense here because in this version Atli is married to the sister of Gunnar.

51 This is a typical feature of much Germanic literature, but is not restricted to works in the Germanic languages, and thus need not be seen as necessarily linking *Waltharius* to Germanic traditions. For comparative studies of flyting in a Germanic context, see Clover (1980), and Harris (1979); for comparison with literature in other languages (especially the Homeric tradition), see Parks (1986), and Parks (1990). Highet lists 33 episodes of “taunts, threats, challenges” in the *Aeneid*; as he points out, the Virgilian warriors’ verbal combats, although having the same function as in the *Iliad*, are of much shorter length (Highet 1972: 116–17; 318–19). On flyting in the ancient Mediterranean, see also Glück (1964). According to Oakley (1985), single combat was in fact common in the Roman world, often taking place after a challenge; but Oakley does not further examine the issue of verbal combat.

52 *Waldere II*: 14.

The most important way in which the Walter legend is connected with both historical fact and vernacular legendary traditions is in the naming of the historical kings Gibicho and Guntharius, and the fact that they are located along the Rhine and have some conflict with the Huns.⁵³ It is important to recall, though, that these kings are Franks in *Waltharius*; there is no record of any Frankish king called Gibicho or Guntharius.⁵⁴ There were, however, historical kings of the Burgundians with similar names in the fifth century, who are commemorated in the Burgundian law code of the early sixth century.⁵⁵ *Waltharius* is the only text that designates these kings as Frankish; in the *Waldere* fragments, *Waltharius*'s interlocutor is a Burgundian, and this is also true of all the (later) vernacular narratives that treat of these kings, as well as the fifth-century chronicles, and Paul the Deacon's *Romana*, in which—unlike in the fifth-century reports, but as in all the later vernacular versions—Guntharius dies fighting Attila.⁵⁶ In fact, the historical Gundicharius's encounter with the Huns took place c.436, when Attila was not yet reigning over the Huns; the chronological confusion is first evident in Paul's text. Attila's campaign through western Europe is recorded most memorably and fully in Jordanes's *Getica*; both Jordanes and Gregory of Tours inform us that the Visigoths—then ruling in Aquitaine—and the Franks fought the Huns under Attila in 451, and Jordanes also has Burgundians in his list of Roman allies fighting the Huns.⁵⁷

53 For a recent detailed discussion of the possible historical backgrounds to *Waltharius*, see Florio (2012).

54 The first Guntharius in the Merovingian family is a son of Chlodomer, and is killed by his uncles (*DLH*: III,18; he is named at *DLH*: III,6). The other Guntharius is a son of Chlothar I, who dies while his father is still alive (*DLH*: IV,3).

55 A Gundicharius is attested as a Burgundian king in sources of the mid-fifth century, which state that under him, the Burgundian kingdom is destroyed; one text (Prosper's chronicle) specifies that they were wiped out by the Huns. The fifth- and early sixth-century sources are: Prosper's chronicle (Mommson, ed. 1892a: 1322); Hydatius's chronicle (Burgess, ed. and trans. 1993: §§ 99; 102); the Gallic chronicles of 452 and 511 (Burgess, ed. and trans. 2001a: s. a. 436; Burgess, ed. and trans. 2001b: s. a. 437/438). Gundicharius is commemorated as belonging to a line of Burgundian kings beginning with Gibica in the *Lex Burgundionum* (von Salis, ed. 1892: § 3). The historical sources for the Burgundian legend are presented and discussed, with reference to their relationship with later legendary matter, in Ghosh (2007): 221–3. For overviews of Burgundian history, see Favrod (2002); Kaiser (2004a); and Wood (2003b); on Burgundian ethnic identity, see further Amory (1993); Amory (1994); and Wood (1990).

56 Droysen (ed. 1879): XIV,5.

57 *Getica*: 185–218 for the battle; Franks and Burgundians at *Getica*: 191; Gregory's report is at *DLH*: II,7. The Franks had also fought another people from Pannonia, the Avars, in the 560s, and more recently under Charlemagne. As we have seen, the Huns are called Avars

There was no independent Burgundian kingdom by the middle of the sixth century, long before the *Waltharius* was written, but Burgundy remained a more or less self-conscious unit within Francia.⁵⁸ Texts extant in thirteenth-century manuscripts in Old Norse and Middle High German (the Norse *Edda* and *Völsungasaga* and the German *Nibelungenlied*) provide us with a narrative of the fall of the Burgundian kingdom on the Rhine at the hands of Attila, and it seems likely that some sort of narratives concerning these kings—as kings of the Burgundians—were known during the Carolingian period in those parts of Francia where a Germanic vernacular was spoken.⁵⁹ The author of *Waltharius* and any members of his audience sharing the same level of Latin education (and probably most other members of the audience as well) would most likely have known that Gibicho and Guntharius had not been Frankish kings; they would also quite possibly have known the legend of the fall of the Burgundians under Guntharius, in which he dies in an encounter with Attila. The fact that Burgundian kings are Franks in *Waltharius* might have something to do with the absorption of the historical kingdom of Burgundy into the Frankish empire. What is equally possible, though, is that by the time the text was written, there had taken place sufficient melding between different groups as to make the differences between them in the past unclear, allowing for the conjoining of material concerning them in ways that did not represent historical fact.

Although very tenuous, there is nevertheless some relation between the basic premise of the Walter legend and historical fact (conflict between Attila and his Huns, and Franks, Burgundians, and Aquitainians); and the names of some characters (Attila, Gibicho, Guntharius) are known both from historical record and later legendary tradition. The eponymous hero, however, is harder to place within any kind of historical context. There have been attempts to link him to the Visigothic king Vallia who ruled in Aquitaine for three years, but beyond the first element of the name, there is no discernible connection between *Waltharius* and Vallia, and it is far from certain that the latter is the

in the *Waltharius*, and the late-ninth-century historical poem of Poeta Saxo refers to the Avars as Huns, stating that they had, under Attila, also fought against the Franks (von Winterfeld, ed. 1899: 111,12–53). The identification of Avars as Huns was a very old one, already occurring in Gregory: *DLH* IV,23; IV,29. On Merovingian conflations of Huns and Avars, see Krutzler (2013): 506–12. For the contemporary and later ninth-century historiography on Charlemagne's Avar wars, see Collins (1998): 89–101.

58 On the place of Burgundy within the Merovingian and Carolingian kingdoms, see Kaiser (2004a): 177–84; on changing forms of Burgundian identity after the collapse of the kingdom, see Favrod (2002): 131–7, and Kaiser (2004a): 184–200.

59 On the possible nature of any oral tradition bearing these narratives, and the relationship of any such tradition to the extant texts, see Ghosh (2007).

historical antecedent of the former.⁶⁰ Vallia's successor Theoderic (not to be confused with the Ostrogothic Theoderic) ruled the Visigothic kingdom of Aquitaine for thirty years, and in fact took part—and according to Jordanes, died—in the battle against Attila.⁶¹ How any of this historical matter could have been transformed into the Walter legend as we have it is a question impossible to answer. The function of this past as presented in *Waltharius*—and to a lesser extent (simply because of its fragmentary nature) *Waldere*—will be addressed further in the final section of this chapter; in the next section, I examine the potential Christian influences on the legend in its Latin form.

Christianity in *Waltharius*

Religion and religious difference are not mentioned after the opening lines of *Waltharius*, which state only that the peoples of Europe have different religions (among other distinguishing factors).⁶² The historical Attila was not Christian, and it is highly unlikely that a Carolingian with the kind of education necessary to compose a polished verse epic like the *Waltharius* would not have known this.⁶³ At the time of Attila, the Franks were most probably themselves, for the most part at least, not Christian, and Aquitaine was ruled by the Visigoths, who were almost certainly still primarily Arian: if they were actual historical figures, therefore, the principal protagonists of this poem belonged to unorthodox religious denominations, an aspect of the past never mentioned by the poet.⁶⁴ The religion of none of the actors is specified, and there is, in

60 Cf. Murdoch (1996): 90, with further references on the supposed relationship between historical king and literary figure; Murdoch accepts the identification.

61 Theoderic's death: *Getica*: 209; the contemporary source is Hydatius (Burgess, ed. 1993: § 142). Given that the Walter legend is—in the Latin at least—about a warrior from Aquitaine, it might be possible that the Old English *Deodric* in *Waldere II* represents the Visigothic king of Aquitaine, Theoderic, who succeeded Vallia and did, in fact, rule for thirty years.

62 *Waltharius*: 1–3.

63 Poeta Saxo, for example, describes Attila plundering churches (von Winterfeld, ed. 1899: III, 21–2)—although this need not, of course, be an attribute only of a specifically pagan warrior.

64 The Burgundians do not really play much of a part in this poem: their kings have been turned into Franks, and their princess has an almost completely passive role. What their religion actually was in the early fifth century has been much debated: Orosius, writing in the early fifth century, says they are Christian, which for him would probably have meant Catholic (VII.xxxii,12); Gregory of Tours in the 590s portrays them as Arian until around

fact, for the most part very little in terms of behaviour that particularly distinguishes any of the characters as Christian or pagan.⁶⁵

The exception is Waltharius himself. The first clearly Christian element in his character occurs when he crosses himself on receiving a drink from Hiltgunt,⁶⁶ but there are also two other passages in which Waltharius seems to be behaving like a Christian. At the first sighting of the Frankish troop, there is a curious little scene:

“Hac coram porta verbum modo iacto superbum:
Hinc nullus rediens uxori dicere Francus
Praesumet se impune gazae quid tollere tantae”.
Necdum sermonem complevit, humotenus ecce
Corruit et veniam petiit, quia talia dixit.
Postquam surrexit, contemplans cautius omnes:
“Horum quos video nullum Haganone remoto
Suspicio”.⁶⁷

This is an expression of (Christian) religious sentiment: Waltharius asks pardon for the sin of arrogance. Franz Brunhölzl has suggested that Waltharius does not just behave like a Christian warrior, but like a man accustomed always

500, two generations after their settlement in southern Gaul (*DLH*: 11,32). The evidence of the Catholic bishop of Vienne, Avitus, is difficult to interpret, but attests to the presence of both Arians and Catholics among the Burgundians. Kaiser's conclusion, that the Burgundians had been Catholic in the first half of the century, and Arianism took hold only under Gundioc or his son Gundobad from the 450s, seems plausible, though there is really very little evidence to support it (Kaiser 2004a: 151–2). On Burgundian religion, cf. Favrod (2002): 92–4; Kaiser (2004a): 148–57 (Arianism and Catholicism); 157–75 (Catholic institutions in the Burgundian kingdom); on the evidence of Avitus, see further the discussion in Shanzer and Wood (trans. 2002): 18–19.

65 There is no evidence for Brunhölzl's assertion that the epic is set in a “durchaus heidnischen Zeit” (Brunhölzl 1988: 8); while it might be set in a period that *we* might legitimately call largely unorthodox (though not necessarily non-Christian!) with relation to the peoples depicted, the time in which the events take place is not explicitly thus depicted within the poem itself.

66 *Waltharius*: 225. On the meaning of ‘signare’ here, see Önnertfors (1998b): 107.

67 “Before this gate I boast these arrogant words: hence no Frank shall presume to return and say to his wife that he was able to take anything of such a treasure unpunished”. No sooner had he finished speaking, behold, he fell to the ground and sought pardon that he had said such a thing. Then he rose, observing them all very carefully: “I fear none of those I see, except Hagano” (*Waltharius*: 561–8; the speaker is Waltharius). On the meaning of ‘suspicio’ in the last line, see Önnertfors (1998a): 93.

to observe his own behaviour in a manner befitting an ascetic ideal of perfection; in other words, he acts like a monk.⁶⁸ It is true enough that in the various panegyric poems of the Carolingian period, victorious kings do not tend to ask for pardon for their words or deeds; and Waltharius's seeking forgiveness at this point certainly does seem—unlike, perhaps, his prayer after the slaughter⁶⁹—out of place, more monkish than heroic. But it is surely more important that Waltharius goes on not just to defeat, but also kill all of his opponents except for Guntharius and Hagano themselves; furthermore, he is completely merciless even when his enemies clearly have no fight left and plead for their lives—a notably un-Christian lack of compassion, nowhere condemned by the poet.⁷⁰ Even in the passage cited, as soon as he rises from his prayer, his next words seem equally arrogant: he has no cares regarding any of his enemies except for Hagano.⁷¹ Later on, Waltharius proclaims his belief that his own hands (not God), will keep him safe;⁷² if the poet is indeed trying to present Waltharius as an exemplar of a good Christian, a monk-like figure as Brunhölzl suggests, insofar as Waltharius is not free of the sin of 'superbia', the poet has not, it seems, succeeded in his task.⁷³

There are no other explicitly Christian acts in this text; we should note also that there are no churches or clerics of any sort anywhere. Nevertheless, the poem has been seen by some critics as an explicitly Christian work, expounding

68 Brunhölzl (1988): 10.

69 *Waltharius*: 1159–67.

70 *Waltharius*: 718; 751–3; 917; 939; 981.

71 We should note also that just before this scene, when Hiltgunt perceives the approaching Franks—whom she takes to be Huns bent on revenge—and wakes Waltharius, pleading with him to kill her, since she does not want a carnal union with anyone but her betrothed (*Waltharius*: 542–6), Waltharius reassures her that he can vanquish them: "Qui me de variis eduxit saepe periclis, / Hic valet hic hostes, credo, confundere nostros" (*Waltharius*: 552–3: "He who often led me out of varied dangers will be able to confound our enemies here as well"). The grammatical antecedent of "qui" in this clause (if one reads it as a relative clause with an antecedent) is Waltharius's sword, referred to at 549–50, so a reference to God need not be assumed (Kratz 1980): 47.

72 *Waltharius*: 812–17. With reference to this passage and *Waltharius*: 552–3, cf. *Beowulf*: 2608b–9b for what seems to be a similar expression of trust in the sword and the hand that wields it.

73 Kratz (1980): 45–8; but cf. Stone (2013): 61, who argues that for the *Waltharius*-poet, 'superbia' is a matter of military overconfidence rather than worldly values or a lack of respect for God. Even Stone grants, however, that Waltharius does "slip into *superbia*", and it seems to me that would in any case be difficult to distinguish so clearly between purely military overconfidence, and not basing one's confidence on faith in God's assistance.

Christian morality as a form of critique against a warrior ethos.⁷⁴ There is support from this view especially from the fact that apart from Virgil's *Aeneid*, which is without question the most important stylistic model for *Waltharius*, the work the author draws on the most is Prudentius's *Psychomachia*, an allegorical poem depicting battles between virtues and vices, in which the vices are all slaughtered.⁷⁵ Reading the battles in *Waltharius* allegorically as contests between embodiments of virtue (*Waltharius*) and vices (his opponents) would be one way of explaining how the one clearly Christian figure in the text—its hero—can be so lacking in the Christian virtue of compassion: the battles are not to be understood as really human, but as the defeat of vice by virtue, and in such a context clearly compassion towards the enemy would be out of place.⁷⁶

Such a reading runs aground, though, on the many inconsistencies in *Waltharius*'s own character: as we have seen, he is not free from the sin of 'superbia' himself, and the compassion he shows (initially) to Hagano's nephew Patavrid can only be understood if we see the latter as actually human, not just an embodiment of sin.⁷⁷ His prayers after having killed (and decapitated some of) the Franks make no sense if they are supposed to embody vice and he is virtue personified, but they also come a bit too late for a Christian with entirely monkish values; awareness of sin, furthermore, does not stop him from taking their armour.⁷⁸ As Dennis Kratz has pointed out, *Waltharius*'s plunder of the dead men points to a passage in the *Aeneid*,⁷⁹ reminding the audience that

74 Katscher (1973); Kratz (1977); Kratz (1980).

75 Cunningham (ed. 1966): 149–81. On the links between Virgil, Prudentius and *Waltharius*, see the apparatus in Strecker's edition, and in addition, Katscher (1973), and Ward (1994). For further references to classical and early medieval Latin works with echoes in *Waltharius*, see Önnersfors (1998a), and Önnersfors (1998b).

76 Katscher (1973); cf. Stone (2013): 65–6, who points out that while sparing one's enemies might have become a part of a warrior ethos from the eleventh century onwards, it does not appear to have been a necessary aspect of Carolingian martial conduct.

77 The context is as follows: after many Frankish warriors have already been killed, Patavrid goes off to fight, an action that Hagano laments vehemently in a moving passage, cursing the avarice and lust for fame that causes such violence and suffering (*Waltharius*: 855–75). *Waltharius*, from the distance, perceives his old friend's unhappiness (*Waltharius*: 878–9), and to Patavrid—this was not the case with any of his previous opponents—he offers advice, that he should not fight (*Waltharius*: 881–5). Predictably, Patavrid does not heed him, and is killed; despite his apparent earlier compassion, *Waltharius* does not refrain from beheading Patavrid after he is already dead (*Waltharius*: 917), thus adding desecration of a dead body to his lack of mercy with regard to the warriors he kills. Katscher admits that there is no model for this episode in Prudentius (Katscher 1973: 89).

78 Kratz (1980): 45–7.

79 *Aeneid*: IX, 357–63.

Waltharius "is behaving in accord with the pagan heroic tradition rather than a Christian attitude of compassion";⁸⁰ and Waltharius does not really express any reliance on God to protect him, talking instead of his own prowess.

Kratz's reading is, however, equally committed to seeing this text as a work of Christian moralising. Pointing out that the end of the work, with the loss of hand, eye and foot, is modelled on the Gospel of Mark, which contains an injunction to cut off these body parts because they cause sin,⁸¹ he suggests (*contra* Rosemarie Katscher) that no single character embodies virtue, but that the text as a whole is supposed to exemplify the dangers of the sin of avarice; this is why the three primary figures are punished according to the biblical injunction.⁸² This is more than plausible, and the biblical reference would most likely have been recognised by the audience, regardless of whether it was lay or in religious orders. Nevertheless, I am not convinced that *Waltharius* can be read solely as moral preaching against cupidity. It is true that Guntharius is depicted as avaricious, and entirely negatively, but Kratz's readings of Waltharius and Hagano as being tainted by the sin of greed seem to overburden the text. Hagano certainly seems to have a desire for glory and vengeance,⁸³ but nowhere does he appear to crave gold; on the occasions when he asks the king to accept the treasures Waltharius offers, this is in order to prevent bloodshed, not out of avarice. Kratz argues that in his speech against avarice when Patavrid departs to fight, Hagano implicitly links glory and avarice (which is true) and thus when he himself goes to fight for glory, he "involves himself with the taint of *avaritia* as a result of his own earlier equation of the desire for glory with that sin".⁸⁴ Hagano explicitly says, however, that he has no interest in the treasure,⁸⁵ and it seems to me equally (if not more) plausible to suggest that Hagano here differentiates between himself and Guntharius by fighting only for honour, and thus cancelling the equation of glory and sin.⁸⁶

80 Kratz (1980): 45.

81 Kratz (1980): 50–1, with reference to Mk 9.42–8.

82 For a more recent reading of Waltharius as a figure tainted by avarice, and the poem as a whole a lesson against it, see also Gottzmann (2000).

83 *Waltharius*: 1094–6; 1277–9.

84 Kratz (1980): 39, with reference to *Waltharius*: 1279.

85 *Waltharius*: 1276.

86 The secular themes of honour in battle, and more importantly, divided loyalty—to one's friend and to one's lord—are key to understanding the character of Hagano, and clear evidence of the poem's derivation from a secular milieu. Note that before the final battle, although Hagano is swayed by the pleas of his king (*Waltharius*: 1092–4) that he should fight, honour appears to play a significant role in his final decision: "replicabat honorem / Virtutis propriae, qui fors vilesceret inde, / Si quocumque modo in rebus parceret sibi

As for Waltharius, to believe that “the treasure seems to define for Walter his view of right action” and that Hagano’s condemnation of avarice in his lament before Patavrid fights applies equally “to Walter’s original greed in stealing the treasure” is surely straining the limits of interpretation; quite apart from other matters, Kratz here forgets that Guntharius demands Hiltgunt, and defending her would certainly be reason enough to fight.⁸⁷ Moreover, plunder was an inevitable—and economically and socially essential—part of warfare throughout the early middle ages, and the distribution of treasure was an equally essential part of the patronage networks by which power was maintained.⁸⁸ Even a monastic audience, linked to this patronage network in multifarious ways,⁸⁹ would have been aware of the economic importance of treasure—and of the associated aristocratic values, which need not be understood as either heathen or heroic (or both), but simply as secular, martial, and pragmatic—and is unlikely to have condemned them as much as Kratz might like us to believe.⁹⁰

istis” (*Waltharius*: 1094–6: “he considered the reputation of his own courage, which would perhaps be tarnished thereby if he were now to spare himself in this affair”). Significantly, he says that Patavrid’s death would not be enough for him to go against his vows of loyalty: “Nam propter carum (fateor tibi, domne) nepotem / Promissam fidei normam corrumpere nollem” (*Waltharius*: 1112–13: “For—I confess to you, my lord—I would not want to break my promise of loyalty on account of my dear nephew”). Hagano agrees to fight not motivated by revenge, but rather by his loyalty to his lord (if we go by his words: see esp. *Waltharius*: 1098–1125), and in addition by considerations of his own honour. But we do not get the impression of either authorial praise or condemnation of honour or loyalty; there seems to be no moral in any of this, even of a secular nature (contrast, for example, the famous scene in the *Nibelungenlied*, in which Ruedeger von Bechelaren must decide between his loyalty to his lord and his sworn friendship with the Burgundians: Bartsch, De Boor and Wisniewski, eds 1988: Aventure 37).

87 Kratz (1980): 41; Kratz (1977): 132. Gottzmann (2000) also ignores this aspect of Waltharius’s motivation.

88 For the Carolingian period, see fundamentally Reuter (1985); and on the dangers of a lack of treasure, Reuter (1990); more broadly, on gifts, treasure and patronage, see also Julia Smith (2005): 198–214, with useful further references. See also, for the broader context of the ubiquity of warfare and military service among aristocrats in the Carolingian period, Halsall (2003): 71–110.

89 See above, Chapter 1, n. 82.

90 For examples of Carolingian Latin texts describing taking plunder in a manner that appears approving, see Stone (2013): 63–4. For a reading of the issue of avarice in this poem similar to that presented here, see Stone (2013): 61–5; similarly already Ghosh (2009): 152–3, not cited by Stone.

Of course, one could read this work as a condemnation of the whole system of secular values of which the ecclesiastical world was also a part, but the poem does not lend itself straightforwardly to such an unambiguously theological reading.⁹¹ Apart from the objections voiced in the preceding paragraphs, we should remember also that while the disfiguring of the three warriors after the last battle certainly recalls the Bible, it is not the end of the work. Although Guntharius is still completely incapacitated, Hagano and Waltharius renew their friendship, and seem quite unchanged in spirit by the loss of various body parts; there is no evidence to suggest that their own concepts of honour and martial valour are in any way diminished. The epic does not conclude with the end of the battle: Waltharius returns home—with his treasure!—and marries Hiltgunt, and goes on to rule for thirty years. And in this context the treasure becomes all the more important, from a purely pragmatic point of view: a warrior returning from exile would have a hard time claiming legitimate rule without some riches to support him, and the ability to be a successful king was inextricably linked to the ability to provide wealth for members of the court. No early medieval king would have been able to rule for thirty years without being able to ensure both success in battle and enrichment for the leading men of his kingdom.⁹² The moral of the maiming of the three men, therefore, ends up being less clear than Kratz argues, given the way the text continues after their crippling.

Our understanding of the motif of treasure depends, therefore, to a very large extent on whether we wish to withdraw the text completely from the context of the secular world of which it tells, seeing it solely as critical, or whether we are willing to accept that, Latin language and literary and theological references notwithstanding, it was not completely removed from the world of lay aristocratic and martial values. Ultimately, the poet provides a pragmatic solution to the conflict: with the only two capable fighting men too wounded to fight—and since neither really desired to fight anyway—the battle cannot really go on, and since it was senseless and legally not justifiable in the first place, it is simply halted.⁹³ This is in marked contrast to the normal heroic victories or defeats that we encounter in other martial epics (whether in Latin or the vernacular), with the code of honour there demanding a fight to the death. Whether the work gives us

91 For a strong counter-argument to such a reading, see Stone (2013).

92 Halsall (2003): 24–33; Wickham (2009): 187–91; and see also the works cited above at n. 88. As Rachel Stone has pointed out, a number of Carolingian texts glorify Charlemagne's plunder of his enemies; there is no hint in them, however, of any lack of Christianity in Charlemagne (Stone 2013: 63–4).

93 Murdoch (1996): 101–3.

such a sensible ending because “the Church steps in when it has to, and stops the fight at an appropriate point”,⁹⁴ is, however, debatable: while not ‘heroic’ in a conventional sense, it seems to me that *Waltharius* presents a pragmatic and secular solution to a secular problem; a purely theological, moralising reading is unwarranted, and reading even this pragmatism as deriving from a specifically clerical viewpoint is also, I think, unnecessary.

I would like to stress, though, that being secular (in the sense of not being solely or primarily a vehicle for Christian moral preaching) need not mean being non-Christian. It is perfectly possible to read *Waltharius* as a Christian warrior: he certainly believes in a Christian God, and has absorbed some of the teachings of the Church; but he is a warrior and ruler, who must fight and acquire treasure in order to maintain his position in the world. There is therefore no warrant for seeing in this narrative a critique of war and martial values *per se*; it is better to read it as a text criticising bad kingship (that of Guntharius),⁹⁵ but otherwise supportive of the secular values of martial virtue, thus placing it completely within the mainstream of Carolingian and post-Carolingian (secular *and* clerical) thought.⁹⁶ Clerics were not removed from the values of secular aristocratic life and indeed themselves often fought in battles;⁹⁷ we should not see the religious and secular as standing in a dichotomous relationship.

Acknowledging this, though, does not quite solve the problem of where exactly this text stands between Classical, Latin, and ecclesiastical concepts of the past (themselves not necessarily identical) on the one hand, and vernacular and secular traditions on the other; and how it comments on these. Moreover, accepting that the text is not primarily an allegory against avarice or arrogance does not tell us what function it serves, and why. The matter is complicated further when we turn to its potential relationship to various vernacular traditions.

Waltharius and Germanic Oral Tradition

There are two reasons to assume a link between *Waltharius* and Germanic oral traditions: the existence of the *Waldere* fragments, composed in a Germanic

94 Murdoch (1996): 103.

95 This is the reading provided by Peeters (1991).

96 Stone (2013).

97 See the references in Chapter 1 at n. 82. In addition to Stone (2013), see also Ziolkowski (2008) for further evidence of the *Waltharius*-poet's closeness to lay, warrior society, in this case demonstrated by his intimate knowledge of the technical details of contemporary arms and armour.

vernacular, and the presence in *Waltharius* of the historical Gibicho, Guntharius, Attila, and—crucially—Hagano as Guntharius's advisor. In all the extant (much later) texts in the Germanic vernaculars, the figure of Guntharius (Gunnar in Old Norse, Gunther in Middle High German) has at his court a counterpart to Hagano (Hǫgni in Old Norse, Hagen in Middle High German); there is, however, no historical model for this character. The Middle High German works generally present a positive image of Attila, whereas in the Old Norse *Atlaqviða*—which is possibly the oldest surviving version of the legend, though the manuscript witness itself is late—he is portrayed negatively; the *Waltharius* seems closer to the German tradition. In the Middle High German *Nibelungenlied* and in the Old Norse *Þiðrekssaga*, the Burgundian legend is linked with the figure of Walter of Aquitaine, albeit somewhat differently from the way this is done in *Waltharius*; the later works do, however, know of the time he spent along with Hagano as a hostage at Attila's court. The legends of the Burgundians and of Walter, however, do not seem to be fundamentally connected, and the Latin text is the earliest work that brings them together—although here, unlike in all other attested versions of either narrative, the Gibichungs are Franks, not Burgundians.

Vernacular oral narratives concerning these Burgundian kings and their (un-historical) defeat by Attila were probably known during the ninth century and later until their eventual recording in writing, though the form such narratives might have had and their exact relationship to the extant poems is unclear; all that is important for present purposes is that we should probably reckon with an audience that knew some sort of narrative in which these kings were Burgundians, fought against the Huns (under Attila), and died, with their kingdom being destroyed in consequence (these facts need not necessarily have been known from a Germanic or oral narrative, though that is most likely the form in which the narrative would have been transmitted).⁹⁸ The audience would therefore almost certainly have perceived the altering of even the legendary matter by the author of *Waltharius*.

Apart from the reference to the Burgundian legend in the Latin poem, scholars have noted also a number of potential parallels between this work and (in almost every case later recorded) texts in one or another Germanic vernacular.⁹⁹ A motif that is common to the Latin text and a number of Germanic

98 A detailed discussion of these issues is given in Ghosh (2007); as already mentioned, the skeleton of this narrative is also contained in Paul the Deacon's *Romana*, and his source for it is unknown.

99 A recent, fairly detailed summary is provided by Bornholdt (2005): 49–58; 63–72; of the earlier literature, Schwab (1979) is of fundamental importance.

narratives is the offering of arm-rings (“armillas”) before a duel in an attempt to avert the violence; this motif is present also in the ninth-century *Hildebrandslied*.¹⁰⁰ It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which this specific use of arm-rings might represent real practice, but these ornaments are definitely known to have been worn by early medieval aristocrats—and even Romans, for that matter—so the reference need not in any way be derived from specifically vernacular traditions.¹⁰¹ Attila’s speech after Waltharius and Hiltgunt escape, in which he says he will cover with gold whoever brings back Waltharius, has some parallels in the Old Norse *Edda* and the Middle High German *Nibelungenlied*, but the resemblances are not necessarily close enough to prove a dependence of the Latin text on Germanic tradition; the extant vernacular texts are, in any case, from much later, so the possibility that they borrowed from the Latin (even if indirectly) cannot be discounted.¹⁰² Another suggested parallel is between the phrase used when Waltharius beheads Trogus, one of Guntharius’s men: “His dictis torquem collo circumdedit aureum,”¹⁰³ and a passage from the Old Norse historical compendium *Heimskringla* (composed c.1225–c.1235), in the saga of Óláfr Tryggvason:

Hann segir: “Ek var nú á Hlōðum ok lagði Óláfr Tryggvason gullmen á hals mér”. Jarl svarar: “Þar mun Óláfr láta hring blóðrauðan um hals þér, ef þú finnr hann [...]”.¹⁰⁴

100 *Hildebrandslied*: 33–5; for a discussion of the arm-ring and its significance in this poem, see McDonald (1984).

101 Önnersfors (1998a): 92.

102 The texts are as follows: *Waltharius*: 405–7: “Hunc ego mox auro vestirem saepe recocto / Et tellure quidem stantem hinc inde onerarem / Atque viam penitus clausissem, vivo, talentis” (“I would immediately dress him [*scil.* the one who kills Waltharius] in well-forged gold, cover him from the ground up where he stands, and as I live, I would block his way with talents”); *Hlōðsqviða*: 13,1–3: “Mun ec um þic sitianda silfri mæla, / enn ganganda þic gulli steypa, / svá at á vego alla velti baugar” (“I will measure you, sitting, with silver, and more, I will cover you, walking, with gold, so that rings roll on all the paths”). A passage in the *Nibelungenlied* is adduced most recently by Bornholdt (2005): 50; I fail to see any real resemblance to *Waltharius*: “Si sprach: ‘der mir von Tronege Hagenen slüege / unde mir sîn houbet her für mich trüege / dem fult’ ich rôtes goldes den Etzelen rant / dar zuo gaebe ich im ze miete vil guote büerge unde lant” (Bartsch, De Boor and Wisniewski, eds 1988: 2025: “She said: ‘he who kills Hagen of Tronje for me and brings me his head, for him I would fill Etzel’s shield with gold; and in addition I would give him many good castles and lands as reward’”).

103 “Having spoken thus, he placed a golden torque around his neck” (*Waltharius*: 1059).

104 “He says: ‘Now I was at Hlaðir and Óláfr Tryggvason placed a golden necklace on my neck’. The Jarl answered: ‘Óláfr will place a blood-red ring around your neck if you encounter him’” (Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, ed. 1941: 49).

There is no other evidence that the author of this saga knew *Waltharius*. No other parallels are known, even in Germanic literatures, so it is possible (though I think probably unlikely) that in this instance, both authors drew on a motif of Germanic tradition.

It has been noted further that the scene where Waltharius arranges a party for the Huns and gets them drunk has some similarities to the Old Norse *Atlaqviða*, in which Guðrún, Attila's wife, arranges a feast for the Huns, where plenty of wine is served, and Attila gets drunk; Guðrún then sets fire to the hall.¹⁰⁵ Alexandra Olsen suggests that the fact that the Huns were too inebriated to have been able to notice even if their hall were in flames would be "unintelligible to an audience trained only in the classical tradition".¹⁰⁶ This seems too large a claim; these lines surely do not require a knowledge of Germanic tradition in order to be understood as implying simply that the Huns were so intoxicated that they would not know if their hall were burning.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, it is possible that some awareness of a tradition concerning Huns being tricked into getting drunk was known to the *Waltharius*-poet, though it seems much more likely that the motif of drunkenness derives from a fairly common theme in early medieval literature.¹⁰⁸ Claudia Bornholdt has suggested that since "overindulgence was a common motif in early Germanic literature", the poet of *Waltharius* was not drawing on specific knowledge of any antecedent of the *Atlaqviða* in this instance, but on a broader Germanic background.¹⁰⁹ However, the earliest passages she cites of scenes in which drunkenness is induced before a slaughter are in Gregory of Tours's *Histories*, so the designation 'Germanic' is unconvincing and unhelpful.¹¹⁰ The depiction of a feast (normally with a good deal of alcohol consumption) is common in heroic epic, not just in the Germanic languages,¹¹¹ and the passage in *Waltharius*

105 *Waltharius*: 288–357; *Atlaqviða*: 34,1–35,4; 40,1–2; 42.

106 Olsen (1993): 271, with reference to *Waltharius*: 322–3: "Et licet ignicremis vellet dare moenia flammis, nullus, qui causam potuisset scire, remansit". See also Olsen (1993): 268–72, for her reading of the feast scene as essentially Germanic; and similarly Ziolkowski (2001): 37–8.

107 Bostock (1976): 266.

108 For a broader examination of the role of drink and drunkenness in Germanic literatures, see Magennis (1999): 17–50; he stresses the importance of feasting in non-Germanic heroic works as well. See also the examination of drinking in Merovingian (not necessarily Germanic!) Francia in Hen (1995): 235–49.

109 Bornholdt (2005): 53.

110 Bornholdt (2005): 53–6, with reference to *DLH*: IV,46; VI,13; X,27.

111 Magennis; (1999): 17–20.

clearly draws on the *Aeneid*.¹¹² Magennis suggests that the tone of the feast scene in *Waltharius* is actually quite distinct from what is found in vernacular works; it would seem most appropriate to follow his conclusion that the passage in *Waltharius* “has little flavour, so to speak, of the world of Germanic poetry [...] smacking instead of the tradition of classical epic”.¹¹³

The links adduced between *Waltharius* and any Germanic tradition can tell us, at most, only that there were some motifs and patterns available both to the author of the *Waltharius* and to later authors of vernacular texts; they do not prove that the Latin text was necessarily based on vernacular or Germanic traditions, though this is certainly possible. The only part of *Waltharius* that has to be derived from a vernacular—and Germanic—source is the reference to “Wielandia fabrica”.¹¹⁴ This corresponds exactly to phrases used in the Old English *Waldere*, as well as in *Beowulf*.¹¹⁵ There is no precedent in any Latin text; these verses can only be understood if one is aware of the legend of Weland the Smith, which is recorded most fully in the Old Norse eddic poem *Völundarkviða* (written in the thirteenth century, but composed at some indeterminate date before), but to which both *Deor* and pictorial evidence from the early medieval period definitely alludes.¹¹⁶

Turning aside from the Germanic vernaculars, it is apparent that the story of Walter of Aquitaine was—uniquely among the heroic material recorded in the later Germanic languages—also popular in other vernacular traditions. We should note, though, that in the Germanic vernaculars, the Walter legend is invariably brought into some kind of contact with the Burgundian legend

112 See Katscher (1973): 55–6; and Magennis (1999): 46–7, with reference to *Waltharius*: 288–304; and *Aeneid*: 1,216; 1,699–706; 1,723–30.

113 Magennis (1999): 45–9 (quote at 49).

114 “Weland’s manufacture” (*Waltharius*: 965); on the significance of Weland in *Waltharius*, see further Ziolkowski (2001): 36–7. As noted above, the figure of Hagano has no historical antecedent, but is present in all the Germanic versions of this text. This need not mean the source for the *Waltharius* had to be specifically Germanic, since *Waltharius* provides us with the earliest appearance of this character in any extant text.

115 *Waldere* 1: 2: “Welandes worc”; *Beowulf* 455: “Welandes geweorc”.

116 *Deor*: 1–12. For a thorough summary of research on the Weland material, see von See et al (2000): 82–105; 112–16; for a more discursive and wide-ranging treatment of sources, analogues and origins, see Dronke (ed. and trans. 1997): 255–90; esp. 276–80 on *Deor* and the *Völundarkviða*. The figure of Weland occurs also on the Franks Casket, a clearly Christian artefact from Anglo-Saxon England that has a clearly non-Christian iconography alongside the Christian material. On the knowledge of the Weland material in Anglo-Saxon England, see further McKinnell (1990), who suggests that the *Völundarkviða* might originally have been composed in Scandinavian Yorkshire. On *Deor* and Germanic legend in ninth- and tenth-century England, see Chapter 7.

(though the reverse is not also true); in Romance narratives, this is not the case. Peter Dronke has provided a full survey of non-Germanic traditions regarding Walter;¹¹⁷ the earliest recorded is in the eleventh-century *Chronicon Novaliciense*.¹¹⁸ The latter text is a monastic chronicle, in which a part of *Waltharius* is joined to a narrative of an entirely different Walter as a means of promoting the monastery as a pilgrimage site: in old age, Waltharius became a saint and a "tourist attraction".¹¹⁹

A figure apparently drawing on the same narrative is also attested in Spanish and Provençal narratives, and a related story is extant, many years later, from Poland. However, all the versions of the tale in the Germanic vernaculars referred to above are much closer to the extant epic as we have it. Nevertheless, we should not discount a cross-fertilisation between the Latin work and various vernacular traditions beyond just the Germanic; vernacular legendary matter, much of it Romance, was seeping into Latin literature from the ninth century onwards, and we need to take into account not just 'Germanic' oral tradition, but oral tradition altogether, and more importantly, a broader, not necessarily formal (verse) oral culture among the secular aristocracy, as factors influencing the clerical, Latinate culture of the early middle ages.¹²⁰

All we can say on surveying the evidence is that there are similarities between later vernacular texts and *Waltharius*; and that the Latin poet certainly had some access to some vernacular material (this is apparent from the allusion to Weland), and was familiar not just with a Germanic vernacular language (hardly surprising, as Latin was the mother-tongue of no one in any of the suggested areas of provenance), but also probably with at least some aspects of the style and conventions of some sort of oral tradition in a Germanic language.¹²¹ We should stress here that even though the Burgundian kings are present in a number of vernacular texts, they are in every case Burgundian; *Waltharius* is the only work in any language in which they are Franks—and it is impossible to determine whether or not this is a deliberate subversion by an author fully aware of the traditions about the Burgundian kings. We certainly cannot read this text, on these grounds, as a rejection of or argument against 'Germanic' tradition by a Latinate, clerical author: these kings are also Burgundian in the fifth-century and later Latin historical works that refer to

117 Dronke (1977); see also Bornholdt (2005): 73–9.

118 Alessio (ed. and trans. 1982).

119 Dronke (1977): 48–50.

120 Innes (1998); Kloocke (1972); Wolf (1989): 171–8.

121 Similarly, though arguing far more strongly for a Germanic background, Ziolkowski (2001): 34–5.

them, so the author would equally have been rejecting the Latin, clerical historiographic tradition. Moreover, beyond the names, the existence of the Hagano-figure and of some sort of conflict with the Huns (which plays out very differently in all versions of the Burgundian legend), *Waltharius* has very little in common with the vernacular stories about the Burgundians. How exactly this text relates to any kind of oral material therefore cannot be ascertained. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that the author and his audience were in a milieu in which, at the very least, an alternative version of the Burgundian story was known, and in which some of the motifs in this text might have been familiar from (probably Germanic) vernacular poetry. (The nature of this milieu will be discussed further below, and especially in Chapter 7.)

There remains, of course, the Old English *Waldere*. Regarding this poem, Ute Schwab has made the important point that it should not be judged in contrast to the Latin epic as some sort of archaic, purely Germanic heroic work: though it is certainly composed in the Germanic alliterative metre, she has shown convincingly that it is—like the rest of the extant corpus of Anglo-Saxon alliterative poetry—deeply influenced by Christian traditions.¹²² While on a number of occasions in the Latin text, “fortuna” is invoked,¹²³ and none of the figures makes any direct mention of God (‘dominus’ or ‘deus’), the Old English text has an appeal to “god”—not “wyrd” (“fate”).¹²⁴ That apart, Schwab suggests that Walter is not a typical hero as we encounter them—and not just in Germanic traditions—connected to a particular group of followers or as a follower, who journeys forth for battle and adventure.¹²⁵ Unlike in most heroic traditions, he is the protector of a woman: every version of the Walter legend includes her, and Bornholdt has taken Schwab’s point further to argue that this legend is better understood as a bridal-quest narrative than as deriving from heroic epic tradition.¹²⁶ The literary typologies used by these scholars are not pertinent

122 Schwab (1979).

123 *Waltharius*: 1235; 1348.

124 Schwab (1979): 351–2, with reference to *Waldere* 1: 23b.

125 Schwab (1979): 231–2.

126 Schwab (1979); Bornholdt (2005): 58–85; cf. also Dronke (1977). While from the length of her speech itself it seems evident that Hildgyth is more important in the vernacular than in the Latin epic, I am not sure that one can follow Schwab in reading 28–29a as meaning that *Waldere* offered *all* his treasures and his sword to *Ʒuðhere*, who refuses them, and thus is fighting solely for the woman (Schwab 1979: 240–3). This is a possible, but not necessary reading. For a close reading of the relationship between *Waltharius* and *Hiltgunt*, see Ward (1994): 88–106, who argues that in fact the most innovative aspect of the Latin text is the inclusion of and focus on *Hiltgunt*, and suggests that “the poet of the *Waltharius* places *Hiltgunde* in the foreground of his story” (Ward 1994: 101).

here;¹²⁷ what is important, though, is that neither the Latin nor the Old English text can be understood as representing exclusively either a Latin, written, clerical, and un- or anti-heroic, or a Germanic, vernacular, oral, and heroic tradition. Both texts attest to the cross-fertilisation that could take place across such boundaries, and also therefore to the fact that *neither* tradition can really be viewed as genuinely discrete from the other.

The existence of the *Waldere*-fragments makes it apparent that the Latin text was indeed closely related to at least one roughly contemporary vernacular narrative; that the Old English poem derives from the Latin is of course possible (though no manuscripts of *Waltharius* are known to have existed in England), though it seems more likely, as Schwab argues, that they were both dependent on a lost (probably oral) vernacular narrative—or, I would suggest, on perhaps different versions of oral vernacular (and not necessarily exclusively Germanic) narratives.¹²⁸ In *Waltharius* we have, then, a text that appears equally dependent on an ultimately Roman (and pre-Christian) literary tradition in the form of Virgil; explicitly Christian tradition in the references to Prudentius and the Bible; and Germanic and possibly Romance vernacular and oral traditions.

Of these elements, the classical one is the most straightforward to address: it provides a model for narrative verse, and was an indispensable stylistic guide.¹²⁹ The Christianity of *Waltharius* and *Waldere* is somewhat harder to

127 The basic distinction is that in a bridal-quest narrative, a hero journeys forth to woo a bride (not necessarily for himself), and there need not be any battle, whereas in heroic epics or lays, the hero fights for honour or treasure. Even a cursory acquaintance with literature in the Germanic vernaculars accepted as 'heroic' would show that there is, in fact, a lot of blurring of boundaries, and these genre definitions are not necessarily very helpful. For a compelling critique of the very concept of 'bridal-quest narrative' as a genre definition, based on the extant Middle High German material, see Bowden (2012).

128 See Schwab (1979). It is worth noting that while the Old English text refers to other characters also present in other Germanic legendary works, this is not the case in *Waltharius*; the Walter-legend appears either to have been made more 'Germanic' in the Old English, or less so in the Latin. The question as to how 'Germanic' we should understand a figure like Deodric to have been for contemporary audiences will be addressed in Chapter 7.

129 It is worth noting here that unlike, for example, Aldhelm (c.639–709), a poet vigorously learned in Latin literature, but nevertheless influenced in style by vernacular verse techniques (for example, the use of alliteration and formulaic phrases), the *Waltharius*-poet seems to have taken little in the way of stylistic influence from the Germanic vernaculars. Andy Orchard notes that the *Waltharius*-poet does use some techniques that are often present in Germanic verse (Orchard 2003a: 136–7: "formulaic repetition and the use of verbal echoes, onomastic puns on character's names, and the subversive use of language"), but with regard to such techniques too, there seems to be far less specifically

deal with. While the Old English text seems to allude to a Christian God, there is too little of it to make any certain claims regarding its religious orientation; it does not appear to be an explicitly moralising work. The Latin text, on the other hand, is clearly inspired by a number of Christian works, but it does not, as we saw, simply present us with a subversion of secular narrative by means of Christian preaching. It appears to be, more than anything else, a light-hearted retelling of a tale of which the poet assumed his audience already had some knowledge. But if presenting a Christian moral is not what it is doing, then it is not easy to grasp precisely what function the distant past serves in *Waltharius*: if the work were intended simply for the purpose of entertainment, the author could have taken a vernacular narrative and cast it in Virgilian verse, without any of the Christian echoes. He could also, however, have made this work much more clearly a Christian propagandist text, which he chose not to do; *Waltharius* certainly lacks the sense of earnestness present in both its models, Prudentius's *Psychomachia* and Virgil's *Aeneid*.

In other words, if the distant past serves a purpose here, it seems not to be an entirely serious one, either of Christian morality, or of shoring up any kind of secular historical consciousness; the author's choice of a tongue-in-cheek approach might well have to do simply with his own taste and that of his audience, whether or not that audience was primarily monastic or lay (it is likely, as Rachel Stone has argued, that the intended audience was both lay and clerical¹³⁰). One thing is clear, however: *Waltharius* is a final proof, if such is still needed, that there was no great gulf between the milieux of those who were Latinate, literate, Christian, and mostly in religious orders on the one hand, and a secular, 'Germanic', oral, and lay world on the other: these spheres were inextricably linked, and just as we have seen that the latter permeated the former in the present and the foregoing chapters, we shall see in the next chapter that the former also had a huge impact on the latter.

The Distant Past and its Function: Heroic Narrative as Light Entertainment

The relationship of legendary material such as the narratives in *Waltharius* and *Waldere* to a sense of historical consciousness is difficult to determine not only

Germanic influence in this poem than in the works of Aldhelm. On Aldhelm, see fundamentally Orchard (1994): 43–60 (alliteration); 106–25 (formulaic phrases).

130 Stone (2013): 56. Similarly, Janet Nelson has argued that both *Waltharius* and *Waldere*'s audiences are to be located in "courtly milieux" (Nelson 2005: 17–18).

because of the distance from historical fact, but also because these texts do not, as far as we can tell, belong in a context where they could be used to propagate some notion of self-perception or identity. *Waldere* is in Old English, and nothing in the text relates to any aspect of Anglo-Saxon history; as we shall see, the other heroic narratives in Old English also have little explicit relation to the Anglo-Saxon past. While *Waltharius* certainly features Franks, those Franks were actually, as we have seen, Burgundians (and would almost certainly have been known to the audience as Burgundians), and the main focus is, in any case, on an Aquitainian.¹³¹ Burgundy and Aquitaine were, of course, parts of the Frankish realm in the Carolingian period, but there is no clear link between manuscripts of this text and either region (most manuscripts are from the northern and eastern—Germanic-speaking—parts of the Frankish kingdoms); furthermore, unlike the narratives examined in the previous chapters, it is difficult to see *Waltharius* as contributing to any sort of 'national' political programme.

The lack of clear connection between present context and peoples in the distant past is posed by all the works to be examined the following two chapters; my argument will be that these texts speak not so much to a sense of ethnic or 'national' identity, but are expressions and acknowledgements of a cultural inheritance that was probably dispersed among peoples unrelated to the subjects of the narratives primarily because of the ease of communication across the Germanic vernaculars.¹³² *Waltharius*, *Waldere*, *Beowulf*, and the other shorter texts discussed in Chapter 7 attest to different contexts and functions of this kind of cultural inheritance; *Waltharius* uses it as the object of parody and satire.¹³³

It would be a mistake to hang too much meaning on *Waltharius*, either as an expression of a secular historical consciousness, or as a strictly clerical moral poem. Certainly, there are Christian elements, and there is an influence from clerical works; equally clearly, the poem is set in the distant past, and draws on secular narratives. But neither element seems to be treated particularly seriously; while there is some condemnation of weak kingship in the figure of Guntharius, it is hard to read the text as a whole as an effort to propagate any

131 Note also that the Franks in *Waltharius* do not come across in a particularly positive light: their king is depicted consistently as avaricious and weak, and the Frankish warriors—with the sole exception of Hagano, the only one of them explicitly said to have a Trojan ancestry—do not acquit themselves well.

132 This argument is also set forth in some detail, with regard to the Burgundian legend, in Ghosh (2007): 246–50.

133 Parkes (1974).

clear Christian moral, and there is also no sense that the past is used either as a means of creating a sense of identity in the present, or as a way to reflect on or confer legitimacy to present circumstances. Nor does the purpose of the work appear to be primarily to convey some sort of secular moral regarding themes such as honour in battle or loyalty to one's lord.¹³⁴ In the Latin histories studied in the previous chapters, it was apparent that the distant past could, and in every case did, have some function, normally of portraying the people in question in a positive light, and distinguishing them from enemies or, especially, from the Romans, whether or not the latter were considered inimical. No such clarity of purpose can be discerned in *Waltharius*.

Given that the poem is framed as a historical work about the clash between peoples,¹³⁵ it might seem that we are, in fact, supposed to expect a work about political conflict; the metre would suggest, furthermore, heroic matter of some sort (even if of a religious nature as in Prudentius). But the poet seems constantly to work against our expectations. It is perhaps not particularly surprising that there is no depiction of battle initially, and that the various peoples simply give in to Attila without a fight. But when the Franks rebel later, given that *Waltharius* exacts a crushing defeat on an unnamed rebellious group, it seems as though the poet is undercutting his own elevated presentation of Hunnish power; their domination over the Franks lasts not a thousand years, but barely one generation, and seems to be upheld by a non-Frankish hostage; and the Frankish rebellion is apparently sustained by a king, Guntharius, who is portrayed as weak. Despite the ceremonial language used of *Waltharius*'s victory, there is no actual ceremony to celebrate the triumph; once again, where we might expect a public occasion, all the warriors quietly go home, the king is nowhere to be seen, and we witness instead a moment of quiet domesticity between *Waltharius* and *Hiltgunt*. The celebratory banquet is arranged by *Waltharius*, and ends up being a bit of a farce; and for all the vaunted fierceness of the Huns—described at the beginning of the poem—their reactions to *Waltharius*'s disappearance are remarkably meek. Even the hero *Waltharius* is nervous about thorns and wild animals—and we are told this just after he has,

134 Here my reading differs from that of Stone (2013), who sees more of such a purpose in this text than I can.

135 *Waltharius*: 1–3: “Tertia pars orbis, fratres, Europa vocatur, / Moribus ac linguis varias et nomine gentes / distinguens cultu, tum religione sequestrans” (“One third of the world, brothers, is called Europe, and Europe distinguishes between various peoples with regard to customs, languages, cult and name, and also separates them according to religion”); this expression of difference is followed immediately by the description of Attila's attacks on western Europe.

apparently effortlessly, dispatched a troop of warriors.¹³⁶ The Frankish king is not a worthy opponent for a great warrior; he is simply a wimp.¹³⁷ One gets the sense that the poet is not entirely serious when using the commonplaces of epic narratives dealing with war; whether this sort of parodying is intended as critique, however, and what value we are to give such a critique, is far from clear.¹³⁸

Trying to understand the function of the text brings us to a section of it not yet considered: the preface. After a conventional prayer that God should grant the author the gift of gab,¹³⁹ the preface states unequivocally that the poem is not intended for edification, but for amusement:¹⁴⁰

Non canit alma dei, resonat sed mira tyronis,
 Nomine Waltharius, per proelia multa resectus.¹⁴¹
 Ludendum magis est dominum quam sit rogandum,
 Perlectus longaeui stringit inampla diei.¹⁴²

136 *Waltharius*: 1147–9. The pun here is a further indication of the humorous nature of the poem: the name Hagano is derived from Old High German **hagen* ‘thorn’, and Waltharius elsewhere addresses Hagano as a thorn-bush (*Waltharius*: 135: “O paliure...”).

137 The intention to portray Guntharius negatively might have something to do with the fact that although Hagano is consistently called a Trojan and once also a Sicamber (*Waltharius*: 1453), these terms are never applied to Guntharius. If we accept the reading proposed in Chapter 3—admittedly for texts from an earlier period—that the Trojan origin of the Franks was intended to give them a distinguished past, calling Hagano a Trojan but denying this epithet to Guntharius would seem to undercut further the latter’s authority and stature.

138 I find Parkes’s reading of the poem as satire, with the intent to “expose the Germanic warrior caste” and portray “the decline of the Germanic warrior ethos” (Parkes 1974: 461) overstated: while we need not belabour the ‘Germanic’ nature of the poem, or of any warrior caste or ethos, it seems to me that the poet could easily have taken a more clearly religious approach if he had wished to condemn secular values; and whenever one dates the poem, it seems premature to speak of the decline of the ‘warrior caste’, given that this class continued to rule—and wage war—in Europe for centuries.

139 *Waltharius*: *praef.* 13–5.

140 This aspect is stressed by Murdoch (1996): 93, but less often by other commentators. For a careful, close reading of the preface, cf. Haefele (1998).

141 Note that ‘resecō’ can also have the meaning of ‘punish’ (Souter 1949: s.v.); the interpretation of this word depends on whether or not one wishes to give the text a very Christian reading.

142 “It does not sing of the bountifulness of God, but recounts the wonders of a young warrior by the name of Waltharius, who was much curtailed in battle. It is more for entertainment than for beseeching God, and its reading shortens the empty hours of long days” (*Waltharius*: *praef.* 17–20).

Whether or not this preface was an original part of the poem is, in a sense, of little import if one wants to use it to understand the work's perceived function: obviously at least one person who read the poem did not understand it as a piece of moralistic propaganda, but simply as fun.

The fact that *Waltharius* has at least an element of parody might have to do primarily with the author's personal taste. But it is also possible that even if the author did not feel it necessary to compose a clear condemnation of the heroic values and secular past which he possibly encountered in his sources, he was nevertheless uncomfortable with leaving them unmodified. It might be, in other words, that the poet was chary of providing a secular work with purely secular values and a representation of a pre-Christian or pre-Catholic past as entertainment, without at least some elements of dilution of those secular values, in the form of ironic, parodistic, and not completely earnest critique. Perhaps this was because he was transferring completely secular material of the sort that was often criticised in ecclesiastical circles into a context that was probably at least partly clerical (this criticism is discussed briefly below in Chapter 7).

Nevertheless, it is clear that he did not attempt to reflect deeply on any moral problems that might have been posed by his narrative. It is therefore equally possible, as Nelson and Stone have suggested, that this poem was intended for a largely lay audience, and thus was not promoting a primarily religious point of view—though if one accepts this reading, one is left with the question as to why *Waltharius* is not more unambiguously positive about secular virtues, and why the author did not omit the elements of satire that appear to undercut (however mildly) the portrayal of his hero.¹⁴³

Stone argues that the ending of the text is humorous because the author did not want a tragic ending; yet she also believes that *Waltharius* is by no means a rejoinder to an ethos of fighting unto death, since killing one's opponents was still entirely an accepted practice at this time.¹⁴⁴ Such an ethos is what predominates in much of the extant heroic poetry in the Germanic languages, and these poems are also, for this reason precisely, largely tragic in their ending.¹⁴⁵ The ending of *Waltharius* might thus in fact be a reflection of some discomfort with a secular ethos that must inevitably end in tragedy, even if the poem

143 Cf. Stone (2013). One does not need to follow Parkes (1974) in reading this text as a critical satire of martial valour to perceive that it does not unambiguously glorify such virtues.

144 Stone (2013): 65–6; 68.

145 See, for example, *Beowulf*, discussed in the next chapter; similarly also the cycle of heroic poems in the second half of the Old Norse *Edda*, and the *Nibelungenlied*, both much later reflexes of the Burgundian legend that is also partly presented in *Waltharius*.

cannot be read as a consistent critique of secular values, and in fact comes out in support of many of them. Heroism in combat, after all, however honourable, cannot have an outcome that results in all parties returning to a stable and secure future—as is the case in *Waltharius*. The death of a king would, in real life, have resulted in the instability of his kingdom as well, and viewed from a purely pragmatic angle, the ethos of fighting to death thus bore with it serious negative social and political consequences, not just honour for the warriors. Even if we read *Waltharius* in this manner, therefore, we should recall that a discomfort with the consequences of martial heroism need not stem from a strictly religious perspective, and could be represent a completely pragmatic viewpoint possibly reflecting both (some) lay and (some) clerical opinions.

On the whole, however, it is hard to find a consistent moral message in this poem, with regard either to the warrior ethos, or—more to the point for present purposes—the distant past. In this respect the *Waltharius*-poet is very different from the poet of *Beowulf*. In the Latin work, the distant, heroic past is treated with a very light touch and without either any sense of consistently positive appropriation for present purposes (as in the 'national' histories examined earlier), or any deep reflection on the problems it might present—even if, as I have just indicated, the humorous treatment might itself result from a discomfort arising from those problems, and might be a form of implicit critique.¹⁴⁶ In contrast, in *Beowulf*, a poem also deeply inspired by Christian literature, the religiosity appears to have penetrated deeper, and the text is the site of a reflection on the difference between the distant past and the present of a sort we have not encountered in any of the works examined so far.

146 Ziolkowski argues that the “playful side” of the poem—discussed at length in Ziolkowski (2001): 39–51—“precludes characterizing the *Waltharius* as either undiluted heroism or undiluted tragedy” (Ziolkowski 2001: 51), a reading compatible with the one proposed here. But a refusal to portray just heroism or tragedy is coupled equally with a refusal to portray just a secular or religious moral, and perhaps the playful element of the poem can be read as a sophisticated rejection of such binaries in favour of (a rather modern-seeming) lack of commitment to any particular position.

Looking Back to a Troubled Past: *Beowulf* and Anglo-Saxon Historical Consciousness

Beowulf is the only secular epic extant in any of the Germanic vernaculars from our period. Although there are many Old High German and Old Saxon monuments from this age, almost all of them are either glosses, or more or less direct translations of or adaptations from Latin sources, and mostly of a religious nature. There are very few poetic works in the vernacular (whether Germanic or Romance) from the continent before the second half of the eleventh century, and the handful of secular poems are short lays.¹ From England, however, there survives a modest but respectable corpus of vernacular poems—almost all of which are, once again, on religious subjects—which share with *Beowulf* similar poetic techniques and vocabulary;² *Beowulf* is one of just a handful of secular vernacular poems from Anglo-Saxon England, and the only one of significant length.

This chapter begins with an introductory section in which I present a brief discussion of the historical background against which *Beowulf* must be understood, namely the origins of Anglo-Saxon England; an overview of other historical narratives concerning Anglo-Saxon history; and a brief survey of vernacular literary culture in Anglo-Saxon England. Following this introduction, which includes as its final part a summary of the narrative of *Beowulf*, I examine first the expression in *Beowulf* of Christian concern regarding the pagan past, and then the connection between this text and Germanic tradition.

Anglo-Saxon England: Origins, Narratives, and Literary Culture

The Beginnings of Anglo-Saxon England

Like Gaul and Spain, Britain had been a Roman province for several centuries by the time the imperial administration collapsed. The end of Roman rule in

-
- 1 The best introduction to the vernacular literature of the period on the continent remains Bostock (1976). For surveys of the vernacular religious material on the continent, see Bostock (1976): 90–234; Haubrichs (1995): 160–342; Kartschoke (2000): 96–113; 132–66. The secular literature is discussed further in the following chapter.
 - 2 For useful surveys of the vernacular religious literature from Anglo-Saxon England, see Fulk and Cain (2003): 48–147; Greenfield and Calder (1986): 38–106; 183–252; and see further below at nn. 24–5.

Britain took place slightly earlier than elsewhere: administrative links with Rome appear to have suffered a final break in the 440s at the latest, and both active imperial administration and the cultivation of a Roman lifestyle seem to have been in decline from the turn of the century. The history of Britain in the fifth century is quite opaque: there are few contemporary sources, and later accounts are unreliable.³ Nevertheless, it is generally accepted that during the course of the fifth century, soldiers from regions roughly corresponding to modern north-western Germany, Frisia, and southern Denmark entered Britain; these Germanic-speaking peoples, the Angles and Saxons (and, according to Bede, the Jutes⁴), after a period of conflict lasting well into the sixth century, eventually gained control of the region corresponding to modern England by around 600.⁵

Some key differences from the situation on the continent are worth noting. While the Goths, Franks, and Lombards had been federates or allies of the Romans for at least a generation—in the case of the Goths and Franks much longer than that—before establishing independent kingdoms, the predecessors of the later Anglo-Saxons had not been a part of the imperial military organisation in this way. (Although some might first have arrived in Britain as

3 On the end of Roman Britain and the problems of the source material, see Fleming (2010): 22–38; Halsall (2007): 217–18; 242–5; Halsall (2012); Hunter Blair (2003): 1–12; Salway (1984): 415–501; Wood (1984); Wood (1987).

4 *HE*: I.XV,2.

5 The earliest mentions of “Angli” are in Tacitus’s *Germania* (Ogilvie and Winterbottom, eds. 1975: XL,2), and in Ptolemy’s *Geography* (Stückelberger and Graßhoff, ed. and trans. 2006: II. xi,15). Later continental sources refer consistently to Saxons rather than Angles or Anglo-Saxons, even though in England ‘Angli’ seems to have been the preferred term, at least from Bede onwards (Coumert 2007: 418–24; Foot 1996; Wormald 1983). The first possible mention of Saxons could be in Ptolemy (Stückelberger and Graßhoff, ed. and trans. 2006: II.xi,11; 13; 17; 31), but it has been argued that this reading of Ptolemy derives from later “corrections” of now-lost manuscripts, and that he never actually used the term ‘Saxon’ (Springer 2004: 27–9). Eutropius refers to Saxons in his account of Carausius in the 280s (Santini, ed. 1979: IX,61); Aurelius Victor, reporting about the same conflicts, refers only to “Germani” (Pichlmayr and Gruendel, eds 1966: XXXIX,20). No third-century text knows of Saxons; the term only begins to be used in the fourth century, the earliest source being Julian the Apostate’s panegyric on Constantius (Bidez, Lacombrade, and Rochefort, ed. and trans. 1932–64: I,28). On references to Saxons till the end of the sixth century, see further Coumert (2007): 395–401; and Springer (2004): 32–56. On the settlement of the Angles and Saxons in Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries, see Charles-Edwards (2003a): 24–30; Clay (2013); Fleming (2010): 39–80; Halsall (2007): 311–19; 357–68; 386–92 (specifically with reference to the context of late-imperial politics); Hunter Blair (2003): 27–49; 116–24; Wickham (2005): 306–26 (on the economic and social aspects of this settlement); Wickham (2009): 150–60; Wood (1997).

mercenaries fighting for an emperor, the evidence for this is uncertain.⁶) The Anglo-Saxons were not Christian at the time of their migration to Britain, and their conversion was a more protracted process than was the case with the Goths and Franks, who had had at least some exposure to Christianity before the establishment of their kingdoms, and in some cases had already converted to some form of Christianity: the Gothic and Frankish kingdoms were Christian either by the time they were founded or very soon afterwards.⁷ The conversion of Anglo-Saxon England, on the other hand, had only been completed by the second half of the seventh century—two centuries or more after the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons on the island.⁸

Because of the roles of the Goths and Franks within the Roman military and administration, furthermore, the native populations of Gaul, Spain, and Italy had been used to the existence of a military class of ‘barbarians’, members of which were often in positions of military command for whole provinces. Thus the passing of control to Goths and Franks seems to have taken place without

6 Guy Halsall argues on the basis of a re-reading of Gildas that continental soldiers were first invited as mercenaries by Magnus Maximus in the 380s (Halsall 2007: 197; 311–13; 519–26); the conventional view places their arrival in the mid-fifth century, or from c.420 onwards at the earliest, which seems to accord with the evidence of the later sources (presented below). If we accept Halsall’s position, the future Anglo-Saxons would have had some amount of contact with a functioning Roman administration in Britain before its collapse. Even otherwise, a case could be made that Vortigern, the British king who supposedly invited the Angles and Saxons to Britain, was in some sense ‘Roman’, and that the Anglo-Saxons were therefore, in some manner, Roman federates; it is, however, difficult to ascertain the extent to which any form of Roman law or administration survived into the middle of the fifth century, and how ‘Roman’ Vortigern might have considered himself. At any rate, it seems clear enough that the Angles and Saxons had not been integrated into any form of functioning Roman administration to the extent that the Franks and Goths had: by the time the latter groups established independent kingdoms, they had had at least a century’s history of cooperation with Rome. There is no evidence for such a lengthy alliance between Saxons and Romans. The Lombards, it is true, had had far less experience of a functioning Roman administration, but the Italy that they entered nevertheless had much more in the way of Roman survival—including large parts still ruled by the eastern emperor—than did fifth-century Britain; and the Lombards came from another former Roman province where there would almost certainly have been more remnants of the imperial presence than in Saxony and Frisia c.400.

7 As we have seen, the question of Lombard religion is somewhat more complicated, but the kings, at least from Agilulf onwards, appear to have been either Catholic or Arian: at any rate, Christian. There is no reason to believe in the existence of Lombard paganism after the first quarter of the seventh century (roughly three generations, at the latest, after their settlement in Italy).

8 Charles-Edwards (2003b): 124–39; Fleming (2010): 131–82; Hunter Blair (2003): 116–62; Wormald (1978); Yorke (2006): 17–22; 118–28.

too much protracted military conflict between these peoples and the Roman provincials. In contrast, the British offered significant resistance to the Germanic-speaking peoples from the continent, and hostilities between various British peoples and the Anglo-Saxons continued for close to two centuries after the initial arrival of the latter.

These differences from the situation on the continent arguably contributed to the continued use of the Germanic vernacular and its relatively early evolution into a written language in Britain. While the Anglo-Saxons were the minority in Britain, just as the Goths, Franks, and Lombards were minorities in the continental regions they eventually ruled, the native inhabitants of Britain remained the political enemies of the immigrants for a considerable length of time; the Anglo-Saxons had also had far less exposure to Roman culture at a time when it was thriving than had the Goths, Franks, and Lombards. It is probably because of this that there seems to have been less of a desire to adopt swiftly the Roman language and Roman culture than had been the case among the Goths and Lombards, as well as the Franks in most regions west of the Rhine, all of whom eventually ceased to use a Germanic language as a vernacular.⁹ Although the influence of Latin, Christian, and Celtic traditions on Anglo-Saxon culture was certainly great, the extant evidence shows that the newcomers to Britain nevertheless retained more elements of a native culture tied to a Germanic language than did the Germanic-speaking peoples in Gaul/Francia, the Iberian peninsula, and Italy;¹⁰ and unlike in those regions, the Germanic vernacular of the minority immigrant group is what eventually gained dominance over all other languages.

Narratives of Anglo-Saxon History

The narrative sources for early Anglo-Saxon history are, in chronological order, Gildas's *De excidio Britanniae* (early sixth century); Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (*HE*) (c.731); the *Historia Brittonum* (c.830); and the various recensions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (*ASC*) (late ninth century onwards).¹¹ Of these, Gildas's work has least claim to being a history of any sort, as the bulk

-
- 9 On the linguistic situation in the Frankish, Gothic and Lombard kingdoms and the evolution of the Romance languages from Latin, see Banniard (1992): 485–533; Banniard (1997): 15–38; Everett (2003): 100–62; Haubrichs (2009); Haubrichs (2011): 22–8; Wright (1982); and the essays in Wright (ed. 1991): 29–43; 101–74.
 - 10 The preceding paragraph draws considerably on the ideas of Ward-Perkins (2000), though to my mind he exaggerates somewhat the opposition between British and Anglo-Saxon culture; see also James (2009): 202–4.
 - 11 Succinct surveys of the narrative sources for early Anglo-Saxon history are provided by Hunter Blair (2003): 13–18 and *EHD*: 109–39; 615–20.

of it is an admonition on Christian morality; nevertheless, it does contain a brief and not very clear narrative of pre-Anglo-Saxon British history and of the arrival of the Saxons on the island. Gildas's account forms the basis of the later narratives.¹²

Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* is justly famous as one of the great monuments of early medieval Latin literature, and has long been used as the principal narrative source for early English history. Its subject, however, is primarily the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Roman Christianity (and it is worth reiterating here the importance of Rome for Bede). Bede nevertheless provides us with many aspects of secular history as well, and includes both a brief description of British history before the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons, and a narrative of their migration to Britain.¹³ The *HE* is not a 'national' history in the manner of Paul's Lombard history, or the *LHF*, or the Gothic histories of Jordanes and Isidore: it really is very much an 'ecclesiastical' history, and Bede betrays only slightly more interest in the distant past of the Anglo-Saxons than Gregory of Tours does regarding the distant past of the Franks.

The *Historia Brittonum* narrates in some detail the history of Roman Britain, and also tells of the Trojan origins of the Britons.¹⁴ It has a narrative similar, in the basic outline, to those of Gildas and the *HE* regarding the coming of the

12 Winterbottom (ed. and trans. 1978): 2–21 (British history); 22–6 (the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons). On Gildas and his value as a source for early Anglo-Saxon history, see Coumert (2007): 386–9; 398–400; Dumville (1977b); Higham (1994); Sims-Williams (1983a); Sims-Williams (1983b); Lapidge and Dumville (eds 1984). For a different reading of Gildas (discussed above at n. 6), see also Halsall (2007): 197; 311–13; 519–26. On Gildas's views on ethnic and national identity and origins, see further Plassmann (2006): 36–51.

13 *HE*: I,i–xxii. On Bede and the *HE*, see Church (2008) (a critical appraisal of Bede's knowledge of Anglo-Saxon paganism and his conversion narratives); Coumert (2007): 403–39 (on his origin narratives); Goffart (1988): 235–328 (focusing on his political context); Higham (2006) (an attempt at a comprehensive study, also focusing on his political context); Plassmann (2006): 64–80 (on Anglo-Saxon origins and identity in Bede); Sims-Williams (1983b) (on Bede's value for fifth- and sixth-century history); Wormald (1978); Wormald (1983) (on Bede, Anglo-Saxon secular culture, and the origins of an Anglo-Saxon identity). Wallace-Hadrill (1988) is a useful historical commentary. For a discussion that locates the *HE* and *Beowulf* "at opposite ends of the spectrum of historical possibilities in Anglo-Saxon England", reading the former as forward-looking and teleological and the latter as backward-looking and nostalgic, see Trilling (2009): 8–22 (quote at p. 21).

14 Since this text tells us about both a Trojan origin of a post-Roman people, and that people's own Roman past, it is in a somewhat different category from the other 'national' histories examined above. For a recent reading of the *Historia Brittonum*'s presentation of the distant past of the British, see Plassmann (2006): 85–107.

Anglo-Saxons to Britain.¹⁵ Finally, the *ASC*, the compilation of which was begun in the ninth century during the reign of King Alfred, begins its narrative with the conquest of Britain by Caesar (in other words, with Roman history),¹⁶ but has little to report for the next several centuries, passing over British history almost completely until the middle of the fifth century and the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons. Even after this point, all versions consist almost exclusively of annalistic entries of a line or two until the middle of the ninth century, when we begin to get detailed narratives, and even some verse.¹⁷

While these works are dissimilar in many ways, they have in common a lack of narrative regarding the Anglo-Saxons before the migration to England. Apart from the *Historia Brittonum*, these sources also agree about the basic plot of how the migration took place: with Roman troops having left the island and no help forthcoming from imperial forces to defend the Britons against their neighbours to the north, Saxon soldiers were invited as defenders of the Britons. (In the *Historia Brittonum*, there is no invitation, but the Saxons, said to be exiled from their homeland, are welcomed by the British king.¹⁸) Upon arrival, the newcomers find the land to their liking and send for more of their people from the continent, and soon revolt against the British and end up ruling the island. Apart from Gildas, all the sources specify the names of the British king (Vortigern) and the leaders of the Saxons (Hengest and Horsa).¹⁹ A Hengest is also mentioned, in a different context and only in passing, in *Beowulf*;²⁰ this is the only possible (and rather tenuous) link between the epic and any extant narrative traditions of early Anglo-Saxon history.²¹

15 On the *Historia Brittonum* and fifth-century history, see Coumert (2007): 441–95; Dumville (1986); Dumville (1994); Sowerby (2007).

16 Bede's *HE*, the *Hist. Brit.* and the *ASC*, therefore, all stress the connection with and importance of Rome, even if in very different ways. On the importance of Rome in Anglo-Saxon England, cf. the (somewhat exaggerated) discussion in Howe (2004).

17 On the *ASC*, see *EHD*: 109–25; Hunter Blair (2003): 350–5; Sims-Williams (1983a); Sims-Williams (1983b). On the relationship of verse and prose in the *ASC*, see Bredehoft (2001); Lutz (2000); Scragg (2003). For a sensitive recent reading specifically of the way the verse presents a particular concept of Anglo-Saxon history, see Trilling (2009): 175–252.

18 *Hist. Brit.*: § 31.

19 Winterbottom (ed. and trans. 1978): 22–4 (Gildas); *HE*: 1,xiv–xv; *Hist. Brit.*: §§ 31; 36–46; *ASC (ABC)*: s.a. 449.

20 *Beowulf*: 1083a; 1091a; 1096b; 1127b.

21 For a detailed discussion of the figures of Hengest and Horsa in the various narrative sources, see Sowerby (2007); see also the discussion below in the final section of this chapter.

We have seen above that Jordanes and Paul the Deacon provided the Goths and Lombards with extensive histories before they reached their current home; Isidore gave the Goths a less detailed pre-Hispanic past, but he nevertheless located their origins far away in biblical history, and did tell us something about their movements before they reached Spain; and Fredegar and the *LHF* give the Franks both a distant past in Troy, and brief narratives of the migration from the starting point in Troy to their current home. Nothing comparable is extant from Anglo-Saxon England. There is no narrative of origins, or of life ‘over there’ that leads to a migration—the history of the Anglo-Saxons starts with the migration, not with life before it, or the origins of the Anglo-Saxons.²² However, the Anglo-Saxons remained aware of the fact of their pre-insular past, as is attested by the continuing dissemination centuries after the event of the migration stories cited above; *Beowulf* is the only text that provides an extensive narrative that might be related to such a past.

Beowulf and Vernacular Literary Culture in Anglo-Saxon England

Beowulf is but one of the many vernacular texts extant from Anglo-Saxon England. Old English, in its various dialects, not only became the common vernacular of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms; it also became a language that was written, both in pragmatic contexts (charters and laws), and as a medium of cultural production. The adoption of the written vernacular for these purposes was widespread in England long before the Romance or Germanic vernaculars gained common currency as written languages on the continent. There had also long been a thriving tradition of Latin learning in England (influenced a great deal by the Irish), and this background should not be forgotten when considering the vernacular texts: Anglo-Saxon England, probably far more than any place on the continent at the time, seems to have nourished a truly bilingual learned, literate culture—by which I mean not only literary production in both languages, but also influence in both directions. Evidence of this is provided not just by the many translations or adaptations of Latin works into

22 Nevertheless, it is important to note that in all the principal historical narratives, history *per se* does not start with the migration, but goes back either into the biblical past or to Rome: there is thus often something of a disconnect between the distant past of the Anglo-Saxon *people*, and the distant past of the *place* they now inhabit. Such a disjuncture is not evident in the histories of the Goths, Franks, and Lombards, even though in those cases too we have to do with lands that had Roman histories and written traditions recording those histories predating the arrival of the peoples who formed post-imperial kingdoms.

Old English, but also by the translation of vernacular material into Latin, for example the *Chronicon* of Æthelward, based on the *ASC*.²³

With a few exceptions, Old English literary texts cannot be securely dated to any point before c.850, after the reign of King Alfred and the revival of letters under him.²⁴ There are extant in Old English a number of long religious poems on Christian topics (Bible adaptations and hagiographies); riddles; gnomic poems; and a wide variety of prose texts, including several translations from Latin, as well as more original homilies and sermons.²⁵ The verse texts make use of alliterative metres and other compositional techniques that share much in common with *Beowulf*, which in fact contains a large number of formulaic phrases also found in other Old English poems.²⁶ The *Beowulf*-poet was manifestly working within a living practice of verse-making in Old English—which had, however, completely absorbed Christian material within this vernacular

-
- 23 Campbell (ed. 1962). For an overview of the Latin background to Old English literature, see Lapidge (1986). One can get a glimpse of the extent and nature of Anglo-Saxon Latinity from the data on Anglo-Saxon library collections provided in Lapidge (2006); it is important to note, though, that unlike Carolingian Francia, where a great revival in the study and copying of secular classical texts took place, Anglo-Saxon England seems not to have nurtured a secular classical heritage to the same extent, at least not before the influence of the Carolingians made itself felt (Lapidge 2006: 129–31). An example of an individual who was apparently proficient as a poet in Latin and Old English is Aldhelm of Malmesbury: see Orchard (1994): 43–60; 106–25; and more recently Remley (2005).
- 24 On the chronology of Old English literature, see Fulk and Cain (2003): 36–47; Orchard (2003b): 213–18. I refer here only to the date of extant manuscripts; the date of composition of many of the poetic works is highly controversial. It is impossible to determine the relationship of the extant texts to any putative earlier oral originals; we should note that it is not only possible but also likely that the verse texts, only recorded in tenth- or eleventh-century manuscripts, were not first written down at this point, but that the extant manuscripts are copies of earlier written versions of the poems. See Fulk (1992): 249–50, *et passim*, for linguistic and metrical arguments suggesting that extant poetic texts are copies of much earlier written versions. For a recent argument to this effect with regard to *Beowulf*, see Lapidge (2000); for a response, see Stanley (2002). On the likelihood that the extant witness is a copy of a much earlier manuscript, see the survey in Fulk, Bjork, and Niles (2008): clxv–clxvi; see also Neidorf (2013b); and Neidorf and Pascual (2014). I am grateful to Robert Getz for discussion on these points.
- 25 For surveys of the history and genres of Old English literature, see Alexander (2002); Fulk and Cain (2003); Godden and Lapidge (eds 1991); Greenfield and Calder (1986). A much briefer overview, but with more attention to broader background of Latin and Celtic literatures, is given by Orchard (2003b). Useful historical assessments of cultural textual production in Anglo-Saxon England, including both Latin and the vernacular, are provided by Hunter Blair (2003): 301–63, and Wormald (1991).
- 26 Orchard (2003a): 163–8; see further below, nn. 83; 86–7.

poetic tradition, and was clearly also a literary and written tradition, drawing on the influence of numerous written (and Latin) works.²⁷ The other texts that belong in some way to a tradition of heroic poetry are *Deor*, *The Fight at Finnsburg*,²⁸ *Waldere*, and *Widsith*; it is notable that for the most part, the world evoked by these works (not including *The Fight at Finnsburg*)—in terms of their reference to figures with some correspondence to historical persons—is largely set somewhere in southern and eastern Europe, whereas *Beowulf*'s world—like that of *The Fight at Finnsburg*—is almost exclusively in the north.

Beowulf belongs, therefore, within the context of a thriving vernacular poetic tradition, but one that, although aware of legends possibly originating in a pre-Christian period, was certainly also Christian through and through. The poem

27 *Beowulf*'s place within what is clearly a written, literary tradition should not be taken to mean that there was no link between this poem and a surviving tradition of oral historical/heroic narratives, though the latter itself would hardly have remained identical to any pre-Christian oral tradition; the nature of such a tradition is discussed further in the following chapter. The fact that *Beowulf* is an epic, when arguably pre-Christian Germanic oral traditions had no access to such a long form, also does not signify that the original poet of *Beowulf* had no access to oral poetic sources (which should not themselves, however, by any means be understood as static) that furnished him with his core narrative material. While the creation of an epic form might in itself arise out of literary influence, such influence by no means negates the possibility, even the likelihood, that the narrative matter itself derived from oral sources. The fact that biblical epic is fashioned out of written sources is hardly surprising, but need not mean that the same is true for *Beowulf*: it has recently been argued that the core narrative material was traditional and originally oral (Neidorf 2012; see further below at n. 149); and that the typical style of early Germanic epic betrays techniques of oral composition (Haferland 2002; Haferland 2006). Literary influence need not, therefore, necessarily exclude either oral composition or oral sources. On the relationship of lay and epic, the absence of the latter in 'Germanic oral tradition', and the literary evolution of the epic form, the classic work is Heusler (1905); see also Heusler (1943): 192–200. For discussion of Heusler's theories, see Andersson (1988a); Andersson (1988b); and the contrary views in Haferland (2002); Haferland (2006); and Haug (1975). More recent arguments to the effect that extant Germanic heroic material was created on the basis not of traditional oral poetic sources, but rather in response to readings of literary texts, are presented in Frank (1991) and Goffart (2002), and discussed in more detail in the following chapter; see also Ghosh (2007): 242–7. There seems to me to be no compelling reason to view oral and written modes of both composition and transmission of narrative material as necessarily mutually exclusive.

28 This poem contains a reflex of a narrative also in *Beowulf*: 1063–1159; the text, along with discussion, and an extensive commentary on the narrative in *Beowulf*, are provided in the edition of Fulk, Bjork, and Niles (*Beowulf*: pp. 180–91; 273–90). For an illuminating analysis of the poem within a broader comparative context, see Reichl (2000): 86–100.

was composed sometime between 700 and 1000, and written in its present form around 1000.²⁹ Little can be said of its author beyond the fact that he had obviously had at least the rudiments of a Christian education, and was familiar with a wide range of legendary material set in Scandinavia and northern Europe, in addition to being a master of composition in Old English alliterative metre. Only one medieval copy of *Beowulf* is extant, in a manuscript that also contains a *Passion of St Christopher*; *The Wonders of the East*; *The Letter of Alexander to Aristotle*; and *Judith*. *Beowulf* is the penultimate text in this collection, coming after three prose works and just before the verse life of Judith.³⁰ This manuscript once more reminds us of the intimate connection between *Beowulf* and Latinity and Christianity: all the other texts are translations or adaptations of Latin material, and at least the first and last can only be understood as religious works. The influence of the Christian and Latin heritage on Anglo-Saxon England is, as it were, physically bound to *Beowulf*, and this bears repeating.³¹

The Narrative of Beowulf

Beowulf begins with a very explicit creation of temporal distance:

Hwæt, we Gar-Dena in geardagum
 þeodcyninga þrym gefrunon,
 hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon.³²

29 A summary of the issues regarding the date and place of composition is presented in Fulk, Bjork, and Niles (2008): clxii–clxxx; the main arguments are provided by the various contributions to Chase (ed. 1981), and Neidorf (ed. 2014); see in addition the recent studies of Leonard Neidorf and Rafael Pascual in favour of an early date, on the basis of onomastic evidence that some sort of legends of *Beowulf* related to the matter in the extant poem must have been known in the seventh century (Neidorf 2012); on the basis of palaeographical evidence suggesting that the extant witness is a copy of a much older manuscript (Neidorf 2013b); and on the basis of linguistic evidence that the poem was composed before c.725 (Neidorf and Pascual 2014). Although in many respects persuasive, these arguments are by no means conclusive.

30 For a discussion of the *Beowulf* manuscript, see Orchard (1995): 1–27; and Orchard (2003a): 12–56; see also Orchard (1995) on the other texts in the manuscript, building on suggestions of Sisam (1953): 65–96.

31 We should note, however, that the codex need not have been conceived as a collection including *Beowulf*, and perhaps too much should not be read into the physical connection between *Beowulf* and the other texts with which it is bound. The manuscript does, however, arguably have some relevance with regard to the reception context of the text, even if it says little about the ‘original’ milieu or context of the poem.

32 “Listen: we have heard of the greatness of the kings of the spear-Danes in the ancient days, how the noble ones did bold deeds” (*Beowulf*: 1–3).

These first lines set up a disjuncture of past and present: there is a collective in the present (“we”) that has heard about people and deeds clearly in the past (“in geardagum”). These lines, however, also make the past inextricably part of the collective consciousness of the present through the use of the (admittedly formulaic, but not necessarily any less telling) first-person plural and the verb ‘gefrignan’ (‘to hear about’; ‘to learn about’). In contrast to the singular used at other points in the poem—and it is perhaps significant that this is the sole use of ‘we’ in a ‘gefrægn’-formula in *Beowulf*³³—the plural here presents this past as a common cultural heritage.

After a brief opening section in which we are told of the four glorious warrior-kings of the Danes—Scyld Scefing, his son Beow, his son Healfdane, and his son Hroðgar, the current king—and how Hroðgar’s court is terrorised by a monster, Beowulf is very cursorily introduced as the “þegn” of Hygelac the Geat.³⁴ Having heard of Hroðgar’s troubles, Beowulf decides to go to Denmark since he thinks Hroðgar could do with some good men.³⁵ As Beowulf and his men are introduced at Hroðgar’s court, we hear that Beowulf has already earned himself some renown for his strength, enough to warrant Hroðgar saying that God must have sent Beowulf.³⁶ There follows a verbal bout between Beowulf and Hroðgar’s retainer Unferð in which Beowulf gives us, in his own words, a further narrative of his prowess.³⁷ That night, Beowulf fights and kills the monster Grendel.³⁸ This is followed by much rejoicing, which includes a poet’s narration of two stories of past heroes—the dragon-slayer Sigemund and the apparently negative exemplum of Heremod—and a ceremonial feast in which another story is told, this time of a battle between Danes and Frisians.³⁹ These stories within the story highlight the strife-ridden world against which the narrative of *Beowulf* takes place. Grendel’s mother now comes to take revenge, and after she has killed one of Hroðgar’s men, there is a fight between her and Beowulf, which Beowulf wins.⁴⁰ Before Beowulf leaves Denmark, Hroðgar makes a long speech, which contains a further allusion to Heremod as a negative exemplum, as well as an explicit warning against

33 Fulk, Bjork, and Niles (2008): 110.

34 *Beowulf*: 1–85 (the four kings); 86–193 (the monster); 194–98a (Beowulf).

35 *Beowulf*: 199b–201.

36 *Beowulf*: 377–84a.

37 *Beowulf*: 499–606. For an insightful reading of this episode compared with the Old Norse ‘senna’, see Clover (1980); note that in this poem—in contrast to *Waltharius*—such abusive speech never takes place between the hero and his martial opponents.

38 *Beowulf*: 702b–836.

39 *Beowulf*: 864–924 (Sigemund and Heremod); 1063–1159 (Danes and Frisians).

40 *Beowulf*: 1492–569.

pride.⁴¹ Beowulf returns home, tells the king of the Geats of his exploits, receives land, and after no other heirs remain, assumes the throne and rules for fifty years;⁴² this is exactly the same amount of time that Grendel's mother was undisturbed in her mere, and that Hroðgar ruled the Danes before Grendel began his attacks.⁴³ At this point, we are told that there is an ancient hoard of heathen gold, being guarded by a dragon;⁴⁴ later we learn that the treasure had been cursed, so that those who plundered it would, according to the curse, face the tortures of hell, unless expressly allowed to touch it by God.⁴⁵ Somewhat oddly, a thief seems to receive such permission, approaching and taking some gold with apparent impunity;⁴⁶ the punishment follows on the Geatish people as the dragon terrorises them.⁴⁷ Beowulf, now old and in a clearly elegiac mood,⁴⁸ and saddened by his belief that he must have offended God in some way, decides he must fight the dragon; he initially declines to take his men with him to battle.⁴⁹ This might be seen as prophetic since after he does eventually take some men with him, they desert him when he needs them most;⁵⁰ at this point, we already know that Beowulf's days are over, for he is called the one who *once* ruled the people.⁵¹ In the fight, aided by his one remaining faithful thane Wiglaf, he kills the dragon,⁵² but since both his men and his sword fail

41 *Beowulf*: 1700–84; the warning against pride is at 1760b. This speech seems to draw on homiletic material and other Anglo-Saxon Christian verse: Fulk, Bjork, and Niles (2008): 213–14; Klaeber (1911–12): 128–33; 457–8; 461–2; Orchard (1995): 47–54; Orchard (2003a): 158–62. Nevertheless, its actual content need not be understood as specifically Christian, and could equally well be read as “a kind of natural, universal wisdom that any noble heathen might share with a Christian” (Robinson 1985: 33).

42 *Beowulf*: 1999–2151 (exploits); 2195 (land); 2200–10a (rule).

43 *Beowulf*: 1497–8; 1769–76.

44 *Beowulf*: 2110b–16a.

45 *Beowulf*: 3069–75; 3051–57.

46 *Beowulf*: 2219b (description of him as a thief).

47 *Beowulf*: 2309b–2323.

48 See Harris (1992) for a moving and insightful reading that places *Beowulf* within a postulated Germanic elegiac tradition.

49 *Beowulf*: 2332–54a; 2345–6. We are told that Beowulf “scorned” to fight the dragon with his troop; the use by the poet of “oferhogode” here seems to be a clear evocation of Hrothgar’s warning against pride at *Beowulf*: 1740b and 1760b, though how much of a criticism of Beowulf this is must remain unclear (cf. Burrow 2008: 56; Orchard 2003a: 260).

50 *Beowulf*: 2596–99a.

51 *Beowulf*: 2595b: “se ðe ær folce weold”.

52 *Beowulf*: 2694–709a. Note however “begen” (“both”) at 2707a, referring to the killing of the dragon by both Beowulf and Wiglaf.

him,⁵³ the dragon also kills him.⁵⁴ In his dying speech, he expresses the hope that the treasure he has bought with his life—and he asks Wiglaf to bring him some so that he may see it before he dies—should be useful to his people, and immediately prior to that he gives what appears to be a moral accounting of himself.⁵⁵ It is obvious that Beowulf sees himself—and the narrative of the poem has largely confirmed this—as free from many of the flaws, primarily conflict among kin, that the poet has shown as plaguing the society in which his hero lives.⁵⁶ (This is a kind of crime, we should note, that was excoriated not just in Christianity, but equally by pre-Christian moral codes, to the extent that we know of them.) Following his death, we hear a prophecy of hard times ahead for the Geats;⁵⁷ it is worth noting that the foretold wars are a continuation of the conflicts that took place before and even during Beowulf's reign, the difference being that now, without Beowulf, there seems to be no hope for the Geats. At the end of the poem, the dragon is pushed into the sea,⁵⁸ and Beowulf is cremated, with the remains placed in a barrow, according to his own request⁵⁹—along with the treasure that had been removed from the hoard: “þær hit nu gen lifað, / eldum swa unnyt swa hit æror wæs”.⁶⁰ In the last lines, Beowulf is mourned and praised; his people

[...] cwædon þæt he wære wyruldcyninga
manna mildust ond monðwærust,
leodum liðost ond lofgeornost.⁶¹

53 *Beowulf*: 2584b–86a; 2680b–82a.

54 *Beowulf*: 2709b–15a.

55 *Beowulf*: 2799–801a; 2736b–42a.

56 Narratives of feud, or of conflict between and within groups linked by kinship ties: *Beowulf*: 459–72 (Beowulf's father involved in a feud); 587 (Unferð as kin-slayer); 1063–1159 (war between and much killing amongst the Danes and the Frisians, related by marriage); 1713–14b (Heremod turning against his retainers and friends); 2024b–69a (feud between the Danes and the Heaðobeards, related by marriage); 2200–6; 2379b–96; 2472–89; 2472–89 (wars between Geats and Swedes); 2897b–3030a (prophecy of further wars between Swedes and Geats, and between Geats and Franks). On kin-conflict in *Beowulf*, see further the insightful treatment of Linda Georgianna (1987).

57 *Beowulf*: 2999–3007a; 3015b–27.

58 *Beowulf*: 3131b–33.

59 *Beowulf*: 2802–8; 3140b.

60 “It still lies there now, as useless to men as it was before” (*Beowulf*: 3167b–8).

61 “Said that he was of the world's kings the mildest and most benevolent of men, most gracious to the people and most desirous of glory” (*Beowulf*: 3180–2).

Despite the explicit praise of the king, the poem is clearly immensely equivocal in its attitude towards the world it depicts; a major question that emerges from it is the extent to which the statement regarding the gold—that it *still* lies there, but is *as useless* as it was before—might apply to the values of Beowulf's world (and indeed to Beowulf himself: his remains lie with the gold). These two lines sum up, in a sense, the feeling of discomfort regarding the (often highly problematic, always very complex) relationship between pagan past and Christian present that runs through the work like a thread.

Christianity in *Beowulf*: The Pagan Past as a Problem

In the poem, the first king of the Danes, Scyld Scefing, who subjugated all the peoples across the seas and is explicitly called a good king, is not said to be either Christian or pagan; but when a son is born to him, we are told that God sent him as a solace to the people.⁶² A few lines later we are told that his renown was granted by the “liffrea, / wuldres wealdend”;⁶³ when Scyld dies, he goes “on Frean wære”.⁶⁴ Given that there are plentiful indications that the poem was composed by a Christian, references to “god” without specification were probably, in the first instance, intended to refer to the Christian God. And the poet's description of the song of creation sung in the Danes' hall, though once again not necessarily Christian in its sentiment, definitely seems to draw on Genesis;⁶⁵ given that this song grieves Grendel, who is, we are told, of the kin of Cain and therefore condemned by God,⁶⁶ it seems possible that the audience was supposed to have the Christian God in mind.⁶⁷

62 *Beowulf*: 13b–14a: “þone God sende / folce to frofre”.

63 “Lord of life, the ruler of glory” (*Beowulf*: 16b–17a).

64 “To the lord's keeping” (*Beowulf*: 27b).

65 *Beowulf*: 90b–98; see Klaeber (1911–12): 113–16 on this passage.

66 *Beowulf*: 86–9a; 104b–108.

67 This does not mean, however, that the poet intended the audience to believe that the Danes themselves were Christian: as Fred Robinson has persuasively argued, the audience would have been constantly aware of both the Christian and the earlier, pre-Christian connotations of the language used in *Beowulf*, which is in Robinson's reading deliberately multivalent precisely in order to maintain awareness of the disjuncture between past and present (Robinson 1985).

Nevertheless, the famous ship-burial given to Scyld Scefing is not an orthodox Christian rite: he is placed in a boat, which is piled up with treasures and set afloat in the sea, at Scyld's express command.⁶⁸ After Grendel starts attacking the Danes they turn to heathen customs, and this is explicitly condemned by the poet:

Hwylum hie geheton æt hærgtrafum
 wigweorþunga, wordum bædon
 þæt him gastbona geoce gefremede
 wið þeodþreaum. Swylc wæs þeaw hyra,
 hæþenra hyht; helle gemundon
 in modsefan, metod hie ne cuþon,
 dæda demend, ne wiston hie drihten God,
 ne hie huru heofona helm herian ne cuþon,
 wuldres waldend. Wa bið þæm ðe sceal
 þurh sliðne nið sawle bescufan
 in fyres fæþm, frofre ne wenan,
 wihte gewendan; wel bið þæm þe mot
 æfter deaðdæge drihten secean
 ond to fæder fæþmum freoðo wilnian.⁶⁹

Paradoxically enough, the heathen Danes, apparently condemned to hell for their religion, are in trouble because of Grendel, someone equally or more

68 *Beowulf*: 28–50b. Although ship-burials were not the rites prescribed by the Church, there are some recorded instances of Christian ship-burials in a Breton life of St Gildas and among Rhenish saints (Cameron 1969; Meaney 1989: 30–2). It is nevertheless most likely that these were themselves influenced by pre-Christian insular or Scandinavian practices (Owen-Crocker 2000: 27–34). In her discussion, Gale Owen-Crocker concludes that the rite is probably closer to pre-Christian than Christian practice, but it is impossible to determine exactly how the poet or his audience perceived Scyld's burial. On this issue, see also the discussion in Fulk, Bjork, and Niles (2008): 114–15.

69 "At times they made vows of sacrifices at heathen temples, with words they asked that the soul-slayer give them aid against the great distresses of the people. Such was their custom, the hope of heathens; they were mindful of hell in their hearts, they did not know the Ruler, the judge of deeds, they did not know the lord God, indeed they did not know to praise the protector of heaven, the governor of glory. Woe to him who shall thrust the soul into fire's bosom through cruel enmity, who cannot hope for comfort, or any change; well it will be for him who is able to seek the Lord after death's day and to desire peace in the bosom of the father" (*Beowulf*: 175–88).

alien to God,⁷⁰ who is twice described as “hæpen”.⁷¹ Although Beowulf does not bring any sort of religious sustenance to the Danes, by freeing them from the terror of the monsters, he also, in a sense, delivers them from what is described explicitly as an anti-Christian menace, and functions thus as a quasi-religious saviour.⁷² But does this make Beowulf either Christian, or even someone worthy of admiration by Christians?

Beowulf is not given a Christian burial: he is cremated, and this according to his express wishes.⁷³ Thus, although he kills heathen monsters, and is assisted in doing so by God, this does not mean that he is himself Christian, though it does seem to imply that he is admirable as a figure from the past even within the poet's Christian present.⁷⁴ At Beowulf's death, we are told that “him of hræðre gewat / sawol secean soðfæstra dom”.⁷⁵ These words are ambivalent: is the judgement of the righteous that which Beowulf may expect because he is one of them? Or should we understand, rather, that Beowulf's fate is uncertain, awaiting the judgement by the righteous?⁷⁶

70 One should note, though, that from the Christian poet's perspective, such a creature could nevertheless be God's instrument. For a discussion of parallels between the depiction of Grendel and his mother, and portrayals of the devil and the kin of Cain in other vernacular and Latin works, see Klaeber (1911–12): 249–65. On the kin of Cain, see also more recently Orchard (1995): 58–85.

71 *Beowulf*: 852a; 986a; on the use of this word elsewhere, see below at n. 92.

72 On some not fully convincing attempts to link Beowulf with Christ, see Klaeber (1911–12): 189–93; Orchard (2003a): 148.

73 *Beowulf*: 3137–40. On Beowulf's last rites, see Fulk, Bjork, and Niles (2008): 269–70, and Owen-Crocker (2000): 88–105. There are parallels between what is described in *Beowulf* and what is known of pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian customs; similarities with pre-Christian Roman rites have also been noted by Hill (2007). I am not aware of any instances of Christian cremation in the historical record.

74 *Beowulf*: 1553b–56; Beowulf himself seems to acknowledge God's contribution (*Beowulf*: 1658b); before the fight with Grendel, Beowulf states that God—not “wyrd”—will decide what is to happen (*Beowulf*: 685b–87). This is in contrast to Waltharius's apparent trust in his own prowess and his sword, as opposed to God (*Waltharius*: 549–53; 812–17)—though note that just before fighting the dragon, Beowulf too seems to express trust in himself and his sword, but not God (*Beowulf*: 2508b–9). As Robinson has suggested, we should probably reckon with a dual understanding of the word “god” and related terms in this poem, since the audience would arguably have been aware that what Beowulf understood as a deity was not the same as their own, Christian God (Robinson 1985: 34–53).

75 “From his heart the soul departed to seek the judgement of the righteous” (*Beowulf*: 2819b–20).

76 The interpretation of these lines and their implication regarding Beowulf's fate in the afterlife is controversial: cf. e.g. Cavill (2004): 20–2, Greenfield (1985), Hill (1988), and

Beowulf himself, at his death, appears to have some doubts about his moral status in the eyes of God;⁷⁷ his sadness at having done something displeasing to God might be interpreted as the poet's placing into Beowulf's mouth some sort of acknowledgement of his audience's worry regarding Beowulf's lack of Christianity.⁷⁸ Beowulf's own account of his life, which belongs to his final speech, his elegy to himself,⁷⁹ is couched in curiously negative terms:

Ic on earde bad
 maelgesceafta, heold min tela,
 ne sohte searoniðas, ne me swor fela
 aða on unriht. Ic ðæs ealles mæg
 feorhbennum seoc gefean habban;
 forðam me witan ne ðearf waldend fira
 morderbealo maga [...].⁸⁰

Though the phrase "waldend fira" could (but need not) be taken to refer to a Christian God, these words cannot be read as indicating that Beowulf is himself to be understood as a Christian; the view of morality expressed here is certainly compatible with Christian values, but equally with pre-Christian moral virtues.

Given that Beowulf is himself not presented by the poet as explicitly Christian, it would seem that he can only expect the fate of the heathens described at lines 175–88 (cited above). It is also perhaps significant that in the praise of him as "moncynnes mægenes strengest / on þæm dæge þysse lifes",⁸¹ the alliteration is carried—highly unusually—by the demonstrative pronouns: is this supposed to draw our attention to the fact that the praise applies in *this* life, but of the future we are uncertain?⁸² The text complicates matters further still, because Beowulf's deeds themselves, and the way they are narrated, do

Stanley (1963), for contrasting views, with reference to how our reading of this passage affects how we understand the poem as a whole.

77 *Beowulf*: 2329b–31a; 3066–8.

78 *Beowulf*: 2327b–32.

79 Harris (1992).

80 "I awaited at home my fate, kept well what was my own, I did not seek conflicts, nor did I swear many oaths falsely. I may have joy for all this, weakened by life-wounds; for the ruler of men cannot charge me with the murder of kin" (*Beowulf*: 2736b–42a).

81 "Among mankind the strongest in might on that day of this life" (*Beowulf*: 196–7; repeated at 789b–90).

82 Cf. Frank (1982): 54, who sees the alliteration as stressing "the remoteness of the past", but reads no religious significance in these lines; and Robinson (1985): 53–4, whose reading is

not make it completely clear whether he was, in the Christian present, a figure of the past who could safely be admired—a point I return to below.

The poem itself is clearly to be placed within a Christian tradition of vernacular writing in Anglo-Saxon England, being related in one way or another to a wide variety of explicitly Christian works (including some in Latin).⁸³ A number of parallels have been noted between the figure of Beowulf and various biblical figures, as well as early medieval saints, about whom vernacular narratives existed in Anglo-Saxon England, many in a similar form of alliterative metre.⁸⁴ The biblical parallels are drawn almost exclusively from the Old Testament, which is hardly surprising: this is equally the case in secular Latin prose histories, since it is only in the Old Testament that there is a real scriptural precedent for warrior-kings.⁸⁵ Perhaps more significant are the number of shared formulaic phrases and similarities in language and style between *Beowulf* and the Old English hagiographic verse epic *Andreas*; the number of parallels

closer to the one presented here: Robinson paraphrases these lines as “He was of all mankind the strongest in what passed for virtue in that day of this life”.

83 The fullest examination of explicitly Christian elements, with special attention to other (vernacular) material from Anglo-Saxon England, is provided by Klaeber (1911–12); a summary is in Orchard (2003a): 130–68; an overview of the scholarship on Christian and pagan elements is in Irving (1997). On the closeness of *Beowulf* to Old English poems dealing with biblical and hagiographic matter, see also nn. 86–7 below.

84 Orchard (2003a): 137–47.

85 That explicit references are largely to figures of the Old Testament does not mean that the general religious worldview expressed is any less Christian (Cavill 2004). Just as *Beowulf* does not mention Christ, and explicit Christian references are to the Old Testament, so too the Old English *Exodus* and *Genesis* do not mention Christ (Cavill 2004: 38–9). Given that they are adaptations of Old Testament matter, this is hardly surprising, but does not make those poems any less Christian. It could be argued that the relationship between Christian Anglo-Saxons and their pre-Christian ancestors might have been understood in a manner similar to the relationship between Christians and Jews—which would also potentially enable a more positive approach to the heathen figures of the past: perhaps the *Beowulf*-poet saw his subjects as belonging to a past as noble as that of the Old Testament kings, but one that was pre-Christian and therefore innately mistaken and thus had to be left behind and in some manner overcome? In this context, see Andrew Scheil’s arguments regarding the possible influence of Christian understandings of Jewish history on the way in which pre-Christian barbarian history is shaped in *Beowulf*: Scheil (2004): 177–88; see also Scheil (2004): 151–76, for the broader context of Old English verse treatments of Jewish history. For a sensitive reading of Old English biblical poetry with relation to Anglo-Saxon historical consciousness, see Trilling (2009): 64–124. On Old Testament typology in early medieval historical consciousness more generally, see for example Heinzelmann (1994b) on Gregory of Tours; and Garrison (2000) on diverse Carolingian texts.

shared by these two works alone would suggest that one of the poets knew the work of the other.⁸⁶ There are further correspondences of language and style between *Beowulf* and other explicitly Christian vernacular epics,⁸⁷ which attest clearly to the fact that the poet functioned within a Christian literary vernacular tradition—albeit one that manifestly used a manner of poetic diction of which many elements must have predated the coming of Christianity.⁸⁸

Apart from the closeness of *Beowulf* to explicitly Christian works, there are other reasons to believe that *Beowulf* might be intended to be understood as a positive character from a Christian point of view. The first is that, as noted above, he kills the kin of Cain, and is aided by God in doing so.⁸⁹ *Beowulf* does not, however, die fighting heathen monsters, but a force of nature: a dragon. This dragon guards gold that is explicitly heathen gold;⁹⁰ the word “hæþen” is otherwise used only to describe Grendel,⁹¹ and the heathen custom of the Danes when they sacrifice for fear of Grendel.⁹² It seems clear enough that in

86 Orchard (2003a): 163–6. On the parallels between the two poems, see further Powell (2002): 105–67; 273–82; a more detailed comparison between the two poems is in Friesen (2008): 107–241. Based on these studies, it seems almost certain that the *Andreas*-poet borrowed from *Beowulf* (Fulk, Bjork, and Niles 2008: clxxv). For an argument that *Andreas* was a theological response to the problem of ancient paganism posed in *Beowulf*, see Anlezark (2006): 347–59.

87 On the closeness of *Beowulf*'s poetic technique to that of other Old English verse, see Fulk, Bjork, and Niles (2008): clxxiv–ix; and Orchard (2003a): 163–8. The poems with which *Beowulf* shares the most parallel phrases are *Andreas*, *Christ* (I, II, and III), *Exodus*, *Genesis* (A and B), and *Guthlac* (A and B); in addition, there are a sizeable number of phrases (135 at a conservative estimate) shared with the Old Saxon biblical epic, the *Heliand*. (This statement is based on a database of formulaic phrases shared in poetic works across the older Germanic languages [Old English, Old High German, Old Norse, Old Saxon] prepared by me in 2005 under the direction of Andy Orchard for the Anglo-Saxon Formulary Project at the Centre for Medieval Studies in the University of Toronto.)

88 Here it is worth noting that *Waltharius* too is composed in a poetic form that certainly predated Christianity; there seems to have been no sense of hindrance in adopting Virgilian verse for Christian purposes, and it seems to be the case that Saxon poets—in England and on the continent—similarly felt no compunctions about using a traditional, pre-Christian verse form for Christian matter. The fact that *Beowulf* is in Germanic alliterative metre, therefore, says nothing about the religious background or convictions of its poet. It is also not of any particular significance in determining the extent to which the extant literary text relates to any putative oral original.

89 On other depictions of the kin of Cain in Old English verse, see Orchard (1995): 58–85.

90 *Beowulf*: 2216a; 2276b.

91 *Beowulf*: 852a and 986a.

92 *Beowulf*: 179a. The manuscript also reads “hæðnū” at 1983a, referring to the Geats; the ‘ð’ has apparently been erased. Even if the Geats are here referred to as heathens, my

this context, both the dragon and the gold—and indeed, we shall see, the dragon-fight itself—may be understood as symbols of heathendom.⁹³

Ruling for fifty years⁹⁴—and apparently successfully, for two half lines are all we hear about this period—and killing explicitly heathen monsters and a dragon ought to be a good thing. In fact, Beowulf is not the only dragon-slayer known to the Anglo-Saxons: a discussion of the dragon-slayer Sigemund follows below, but we should note already—following Christine Rauer—that in the description of the dragon-fight, the *Beowulf*-poet seems to be much closer to hagiographic texts than he is to any Old Norse or other Germanic parallels.⁹⁵ The hagiographic dragon-fights examined by Rauer have a number of structural elements in common with the dragon-fight in *Beowulf*.⁹⁶ This would seem to make Beowulf all the more positive a figure in a Christian world, drawing him close to the Christian saints.

But the similarities between Beowulf and Christian saints should not blind us to the key differences. Unlike Beowulf, the saints always survive the encounter (which is in fact rarely a real ‘fight’⁹⁷)—and what is probably equally important, their dragons are just dragons: symbols, to be sure, of horrors that

argument still stands, for Beowulf has in many ways hitherto been depicted as distinct from and better than the society around him; the Geats are particularly embroiled in the cycle of murderous conflict against kin (see above at n. 56), and referring to them as heathen might thus be appropriate, though such conflict was not restricted to pre-Christian society. If we understand this line as stating that the Geats are heathen, however, this could indicate that Beowulf too is heathen, like the other Geats. The most recent editors choose to emend to “hæledum”; cf. their commentary on the passage (Fulk, Bjork, and Niles 2008: 228). Note also *Beowulf*: 2468–71: the poet describes Hreðel’s death by saying that he “godes leoht geceas” (“chose God’s light”), which could be understood as meaning the Christian God, but equally could be seen as referring to a pre-Christian deity “while at the same time having, by happy chance, a certain Christian resonance” (Robinson 1985: 51–2, with the quote at p. 52).

93 On the gold as a symbol of heathen values, see Kaske (1963): 300–1. The context in *Beowulf* is quite different from the situation in *Waltharius*, where there is little reason to link treasure with heathendom.

94 *Beowulf*: 2208b–9a.

95 Rauer (2000): 74–86; 136; 140–2.

96 Rauer lists the following similar elements: “the dragon’s destructiveness and its social repercussions, the presence of frightened spectators during the fight and their relationship with the hero, the loyalty and trust displayed by a smaller number of companions, the common journey to the dragon’s habitat, the presence of guides, the summoning of the dragon from its cave, the messengers who are sent out after the fight and the refreshing water created and distributed after the fight” (Rauer 2000: 74).

97 Orchard (2003a): 151.

heathens had to face, which are frightened away by the new religion, but never, as in *Beowulf*, guardians of heathen gold. Although the parallels between *Beowulf* and the saintly dragon encounters is significant, the combination of the similarities to the hagiographic texts with key differences—heathen gold, and the death of the dragon-slayer—is suggestive: one could argue that even though *Beowulf* does not, it seems, pursue the gold out of avarice, his fight against the dragon who guards heathen gold itself might be an indication that he is still caught in the world of heathen values, and thus, unlike the saints, he must not only die, but face an uncertain future in the afterlife.

Such a reading seems to be supported by the fact that the poet's choice of vocabulary can be interpreted as bringing *Beowulf* and the dragon close together in a common semantic field:⁹⁸ both are called “eald”, “frod”, “hord-weard”, “beorges weard”, and “gebolgen”.⁹⁹ In his own words, *Beowulf* seems to align himself with the dragon by his use of the dual form.¹⁰⁰ The word “aglæca” (“formidable opponent”) is used in this poem principally to refer to Grendel, his mother, sea-beasts, and the dragon;¹⁰¹ it is also (possibly) used once of *Beowulf* alone,¹⁰² and, interestingly, once of *Beowulf* and the dragon together.¹⁰³

Beowulf is not the only dragon-slayer in this text; at line 879a, we learn that the “scop” (“poet”) tells of Sigemund's “fæhðe ond fyrena” (“hostile acts/battles and wicked deeds/crimes”). The narrative concerning the Wælsing Sigemund is—in contrast to some of the other stories within stories that we hear in

98 Georgianna (1987): 848, n. 61; Orchard (2003a): 236, n. 108.

99 *Beowulf*: 2210a, 2271a (“old”); 2513a, 2277a (“wise”); 1852a, 2293b, 2302b, 2554b, 2593a (“hoard-guardian”); 2524b, 2580b, 3066b (“mountain's guardian”); 2220b, 2401b (“enraged”). It is particularly interesting that *Beowulf* is called “hordweard” since we have no other indication that *Beowulf* guards a hoard. Note, though, that *hordweard hæleþa* is also used to describe Hroðgar (1047a). Robert Getz suggests that when referring to *Beowulf* and Hroðgar, it refers to “a ruler and guardian of the nation's wealth” and is thus just “a formulaic phrase for a human ruler”: the dragon hoards without any function, whereas *Beowulf* and Hroðgar guard treasure for their people; there is thus a fundamental distinction between *Beowulf* and the dragon with regard to treasure (personal communication, 7th April 2009).

100 Orchard (2003a): 233, with reference to *Beowulf*: 2525b; 2526b; 2532a.

101 *Beowulf*: 159a, 425a, 433b, 592a, 646b, 732a, 739a, 816a, 989b, 1000b and 1269a (Grendel; this last instance could potentially refer to *Beowulf*); 1259a (“aglæcwif” for Grendel's mother); 556a (sea-beasts); 2520a, 2534a, 2557a, 2905a (the dragon).

102 *Beowulf*: 1512a; it could here equally well apply to the sea-beasts, and probably does.

103 *Beowulf*: 2592a. Cf. Griffith (1995); and the rejoinder in Robinson (1997). *Beowulf* seems not just similar to the dragon in some ways, but is also drawn close to the monsters (Orchard 1995: 31–7).

Beowulf—oddly unsatisfactory, giving us very little information, even though we are told that the “scop” “welhwylc gecwæð / þæt he fram Sigemundes secgan hyrde / ellendædum”;¹⁰⁴ it is especially mysterious that the *Beowulf*-poet discloses so little about Sigemund, given that the “scop” apparently said much that was unknown.¹⁰⁵ We hear of how Sigemund and his sister’s son Fitela were close allies in their fights, but how Sigemund nevertheless killed the dragon alone, without his nephew being present.¹⁰⁶ In contrast to *Beowulf*, Sigemund took all the treasure and was able to use it as he wished.¹⁰⁷ Sigemund was, moreover, “wreccena wide mærost / ofer werþeode”.¹⁰⁸

Following the narrative of Sigemund, we are given what is clearly a negative exemplum in the form of the story of Heremod;¹⁰⁹ it has conventionally been assumed that these two present contrasting exempla of good and bad heroes. Sigemund is, however, potentially not a wholly positive figure. The possibly negative implications of the narrative of Sigemund have been examined in detail by Mark Griffith and Andy Orchard,¹¹⁰ and their arguments can be swiftly summarised before moving on to what is of more immediate concern: the place of *Beowulf* and Sigemund within the poetic tradition, and how we are supposed to judge them.¹¹¹

The negative reading of Sigemund is, in essence, based on the words used to describe him: “fyren” elsewhere in this text appears to have a solely negative connotation,¹¹² being used primarily to describe Grendel’s deeds; the phrase “fæhðe ond fyrena” is also used of Grendel’s deeds,¹¹³ and by *Beowulf* regarding the attack of the Swedes.¹¹⁴ Sigemund’s deeds are, it seems from the term used to describe them, of an uncanny kind;¹¹⁵ “uncup” (“unknown/uncanny”) is otherwise used to characterise Grendel’s malice, Grendel himself, and the paths to Grendel’s mere, and the dragon’s lair.¹¹⁶ In all these cases, the word is linked to

104 “Told everything that he had heard said regarding the bold deeds of Sigemund” (*Beowulf*: 874b–876a).

105 *Beowulf*: 876b: “uncupes fela”.

106 *Beowulf*: 881b–9.

107 *Beowulf*: 894b–95a: “brucan moste / selves dome”.

108 “The most widely known exile/hero among people” (*Beowulf*: 897–8a).

109 *Beowulf*: 901–15.

110 Griffith (1995); Orchard (2003a): 105–13.

111 For a response to Griffith, see Robinson (1997).

112 *Beowulf*: 101a; 164a; 628a; 750b; 811a; 915b; 1932b.

113 *Beowulf*: 137a and 153a.

114 *Beowulf*: 2480a.

115 *Beowulf*: 876b: “uncupes fela”.

116 *Beowulf*: 276b; 960a; 1410b; 2214a.

an unambiguously negative figure,¹¹⁷ with whom, therefore, Sigemund is associated by the choice of words.

This is not necessarily conclusive evidence that Sigemund is a negative figure; even if it were, that need not tell us much about how to view Beowulf himself. But Sigemund is not just another dragon-slayer who happens to be mentioned. He (and not a Christian saint) is the only other dragon-slayer in this text; and his dragon, unlike those of the saints, guarded treasure, so a comparison of Beowulf and Sigemund is hardly counter-intuitive: Sigemund can have no function in the poem other than to serve as a foil to Beowulf. And in this context it is important that Sigemund is a well-known figure in later Old Norse and Middle High German literature; his son was famous as a dragon-slayer, and both were known to have been heavily embroiled in a cycle of kin-conflict, murder, and incest. These details are not given in *Beowulf*, but it certainly seems to be the case that the poet expects the audience to know more about Sigemund than is contained within this poem. The name Sigemund would therefore probably have conjured up in the minds of the audience some associations with the pagan figure of legend we know from other contexts—though of course we cannot be certain how close any known but now-lost narrative of Sigemund in Anglo-Saxon England was to the extant Norse material.¹¹⁸

117 That the dragon might have some right on his side does not detract from the fact that he is evil, any more than Grendel's mother's legal justifications remove the taint she bears as kin of Cain; note also the references provided by Klaeber (1911–12): 188–9, for a dragon as the image of Satan, which relates surely to the hagiographic dragon-fights in which the saints bring Christianity and defeat the dragon (above at nn. 95–6). Leyerle (1965) states correctly that over the course of Beowulf's three fights, his own justification is weakened and that of his opponent increases, but this is to ignore the clearly negative aspects of Beowulf's opponents; even the dragon, while rightly incensed by the theft (for which Beowulf himself is hardly to blame), nevertheless causes much damage to Beowulf's people. But perhaps we should also consider, from a much more providential point of view, whether the thief really did wrong in stealing the gold: have we not been told that only one permitted by God would be able to access the treasure (*Beowulf*: 3051–7)? Are we supposed to understand the whole process of the destruction of Beowulf and eventually his kingdom as one brought about, or at least permitted, by God, who allowed the thief to wake the dragon? (In this reading, Robert Getz suggests, the deed may itself be reprehensible, but nevertheless be “used by God's providence”. Personal communication, 7th April 2009).

118 We should note also that Sigemund's dragon-fight is, as Orchard has noted, very different in the Norse material: he suggests therefore that the *Beowulf*-poet has deliberately made it more like Beowulf's own dragon-fight (Orchard 2003a: 108), thus potentially drawing the two closer together than tradition would have had it. Though the story of Sigemund is

As Griffith has pointed out, if we view Beowulf as being akin, in his deeds and character, to Sigemund, then we place him firmly in a vernacular, originally pagan, heroic tradition, and see him compared to one of the most famous figures of that tradition—but he is also, therefore, closer to the taint of heathendom. If he is less like Sigemund, he loses such a clear location within the tradition, but is also more free of the taints associated with the pagan past.¹¹⁹ It seems to me that he is comparable to Sigemund only in that both kill treasure-hoarding dragons; but this is hardly an insignificant detail. The figure of Beowulf therefore falls somewhere uncomfortably between the Christian saints who kill treasure-less dragons, and the pagan hero who kills a dragon that does guard a treasure; unlike either of them, he dies in the effort.

Sigemund prefigures Beowulf in a way, for he is the exemplary pagan dragon-slaying hero, fully embroiled in all the flaws inherent in his society, but nevertheless, within the values of his own milieu, apparently an admirable figure. (I say “apparently” because kin-conflict was no less problematic in pre-Christian as in Christian society, however endemic it might have been.) Beowulf manages to preserve himself, to some extent, from the constant strife (especially between kin) and apparently hopeless destruction of his world (of which the narrative of *Beowulf* provides numerous examples),¹²⁰ and in some ways perhaps prefigures the Christian dragon-slayers to come; he is certainly favoured by God when he fights God’s enemies, the kin of Cain.¹²¹ It is perhaps legitimate

told after Beowulf fights a monster, there is no attestation anywhere else of Sigemund or anyone associated with him doing any such thing.

119 Griffith (1995): 40.

120 Incidences of kin-conflict in *Beowulf* are listed above at n. 56. Conflict between (royal) kin was not, of course, a uniquely pagan problem, being quite prevalent even in kingdoms that had long been Christian. The consequent problems of succession and lack of adequate rulership were therefore certainly current or recent in Anglo-Saxon England, regardless of when one chooses to date the poem; in reflecting on this kind of sinfulness, the poet critiques his own era as well as the past (Stanley 2005).

121 On the theme of the ‘noble heathen’ prefiguring the ‘good Christian’ in the context of the Scandinavian sagas, see the important studies of Harris (1986), Lönnroth (1969), and Weber (1987); specifically with reference to *Beowulf* and the possibility of a sort of wisdom and piety attributed to heathens in this poem, see Robinson (1985): 32–7; 41–2; 59, with references to comparanda from Anglo-Saxon England and elsewhere. ‘Noble heathens’ presented in the Icelandic material also stay away from most of the attributes of their pagan world, especially idolatry and sorcery, though they are nevertheless fully implicated in the system of revenge and feud for the sake of honour. Beowulf seems to be partly (but only partly) exculpated from even these taints; note that he does seek to avenge the deaths of Hygelac and Heardred (Georgianna 1987: 841–6; 848). Gerd Wolfgang Weber argues convincingly that many Scandinavian writers present noble heathens in a manner

to suggest, however, that he is unable to survive the dragon-fight precisely because although he is the best of his time, he is not yet the one to usher in a new time. Neither fully a saint nor fully a sinner, and thus lacking perhaps both the very sinfulness of the one,¹²² and the divine grace of the other, that allow both to slay a dragon with impunity, Beowulf, is, it seems, destined to die—and perhaps, the audience might have wondered, face eternal damnation, if not for his deeds, then possibly for his lack of Christian religion?

The poet's attitude to past heroism is, therefore, highly ambiguous.¹²³ at the end of the poem, Beowulf's remains are buried—underground, as the dragon had been for so many years—along with the heathen gold the dragon had been guarding, overlooking the sea into which the dragon's corpse has been pushed out by his men. One could suggest that both because of the words used to describe Beowulf and the dragon alike, and the odd way in which Beowulf seems to take the dragon's place with the gold underground—and despite his dying hope that the gold would be useful to his people,¹²⁴ we know, from the poet's words at the end of the poem that it shall remain useless, as it had been with the dragon¹²⁵—Beowulf seems himself almost to assume, at the end of the poem, some of the qualities of the dreadful force of nature that he has killed, guarding useless heathen gold.

Just as in Paul the Deacon's narrative, in the wake of the death of Alboin (another apparently great king of uncertain religion), his people experience political chaos, so we hear a prophecy at the end of *Beowulf* that the death of the “frod” and “god cyning”,¹²⁶ who ruled for fifty years, will be followed by catastrophe for his people.¹²⁷ Unlike Paul, however, the poet here gives us no future narrative with a positive outlook, nor any link between the Christian present and the ambiguous past of the sort we find in Paul's Lombard history. We are left looking back to a world facing destruction after the death of a

that shows they prefigure the coming of Christianity (Weber 1987). There is no such clear message in *Beowulf*, but considering the hagiographic parallels adduced by Rauer (2000), the possibility that something similar is implied should not be excluded.

122 We should note that in the Norse version of the story, Sigemund is a shape-shifter, an explicitly pagan attribute.

123 In his very influential and sensitive reading of the text, Robinson argued that “a combined admiration and regret is the dominant tone in *Beowulf*” and persuasively demonstrated that the “appositive” style of the text was adopted precisely to further such an ambiguous presentation of the narrative matter: Robinson (1985): 11, *et passim*.

124 *Beowulf*: 2800b–1a.

125 *Beowulf*: 3168.

126 *Beowulf*: 2209b; 2390b; in the latter case the phrase might not apply to Beowulf.

127 *Beowulf*: 2999–3007a; 3015b–27.

hero whose deeds are portrayed with wonder, but without unambiguous admiration.¹²⁸

As Orchard points out, after the description of the defeat of Grendel and his mother, “praise of Beowulf is somewhat undermined by the implied criticism of others [...] the poet implicitly reminds us [...] that the men against whom he is measured are not themselves beyond reproach”.¹²⁹ This praise comes after Beowulf’s successful struggles against the two monsters, and even a Christian poet could have appreciated the value of these battles, for the monsters were the kin of Cain, and therefore biblically sanctioned as potential enemies of good. Thus in this case the unambiguously ‘good deeds’ are slightly tainted by the fact that the praise at the end of this phase in the hero’s life is always measured against the negative qualities of others, rather than simply expressing absolute positive attributes of Beowulf. This is perhaps justifiable, for Beowulf has not, as yet, been a ‘good king’ by any standards: what he has done is fight monsters, but he has not ruled, ensured peace, or distributed treasure and ensured prosperity.

Fifty years on, Beowulf has been a good king, and has ruled his people in peace, yet what he himself chooses to stress are again in the first instance his “negative achievements” (though he does also mention his peaceful rule).¹³⁰ In fact, Beowulf appears to be contrasted throughout the poem against the flawed and ultimately destructive values of his society,¹³¹ but

128 In both cases, there is no explicit, and not necessarily any implicit blame of Alboin or Beowulf; nevertheless, it is a fact that their rule, however great, did not ensure lasting stability. It is not just the retrospective marvelling at the heroism of a ruler of uncertain religious value, combined with a foreboding for that ruler’s people’s future, that is common to *Beowulf* and the *HL*; it has recently been argued the *Beowulf*-poet shares with Paul (and some other Latin historians) even some elements of the craft of narrating wondrous events of the past (Scheil 2008: 288–90; 292–3).

129 Orchard (2003a): 256, with reference to *Beowulf*: 2166b–69a; cf. however the more whole-hearted praise a few lines later, at *Beowulf*: 2177–89.

130 Hill (1982): 168, with reference to *Beowulf*: 2736b–42a. Joseph Harris believes that Beowulf’s claims of not having sworn false oaths or killed kin are “inessential” and “a carryover from the underlying genre” (Harris 1992: 18). While I agree that the speech does represent a part of the poet’s absorption of and reflection on his literary inheritance (as Harris has cogently argued elsewhere with regard to the whole poem: Harris 1985: 272), the very fact that these elements of the speech are “inessential” could be telling, and not just a matter of literary heritage: Beowulf and the poet both know why he is especially worthy of praise, and thus implicitly hint at what praise he cannot deserve.

131 That the heroic ethos of revenge and honour, which perpetuates a circle of violence, is criticised by the poet has been pointed out by several scholars; see especially Georgianna’s stimulating reading (1987). Georgianna demonstrates very effectively how in the second

although his peaceful rule for fifty years is surely an achievement, he is ultimately still inextricably caught up in the social ethos of his time.¹³² He takes his place in the pantheon of heroes by doing what the most famous of them had done:¹³³ killing a dragon; he leaves his people to face the fate not uncommon in their day: unending strife, and possible extinction; he himself faces an uncertain judgement, not necessarily different from that of others of his day: better, perhaps, than the certain condemnation of most heathens, but still not necessarily the eternal life promised to the Christian.¹³⁴ And it seems that his single loyal follower also tempers his praise with criticism: Wiglaf refers to his deeds as “dæda dollicra”,¹³⁵ and later appears to suggest that the Geats suffer because of Beowulf’s will.¹³⁶ Orchard suggests that here, “Wiglaf takes on the voice of the poet, marveling at a heroism that he cannot quite condone”.¹³⁷ Although Beowulf has been something of a saviour to the Danes and preserved peace as a king,

part of the poem we are shown the inherent tragedy of the heroic society, and how Beowulf himself, by inheriting Hreðel’s mantle, ultimately also inherits even that great king’s inability to step out of the circle of loss and destruction.

- 132 It is interesting that if any censure is explicitly applied to Beowulf, it relates to the fight against the dragon—and this dragon was not only explicitly wronged, but also, unlike the Grendels, had no specifically biblical taint attached to him (at least in this poem). It can hardly be a coincidence that Beowulf is helped by God to kill the kin of Cain (Grendel’s mother), but he dies when fighting a force of nature; in Tolkien’s words, “triumph over the lesser and more clearly human is cancelled by defeat before the older and more elemental” (Tolkien 1936: 276). One might read this as an indication that pagan valour is still effective against men and quasi-humans, but only Christian virtue can defeat the wrath of nature.
- 133 Whether one translates “wrecca” negatively or positively (*Beowulf*: 898a), it is of some import that Sigemund was the best known (*Beowulf*: 898b: “wide mærost”) of exiles (or heroes).
- 134 We should note the curious contradiction that the treasure is cursed by pagans, but the curse takes on some validity in the Christian viewpoint too; and the passage informing us about the curse (*Beowulf*: 3069–75; 3051–57) “describes a pagan curse in unmistakably Christian language” (Irving 1997: 178). Perhaps Beowulf does indeed suffer the effects of the curse: the barrow, with the heathen treasure, is not quite a heathen temple, to which those who break in on the treasure are condemned (*Beowulf*: 3072a)—but is it, from the Christian poet’s viewpoint, necessarily that different?
- 135 “Foolish/audacious deeds” (*Beowulf*: 2646). Even if we accept “audacious” as the correct translation, we have seen that this quality is not, in this poem, an unambiguously positive one; on the interpretation of this word, see Orchard (2003a): 210, n. 25; 262.
- 136 *Beowulf*: 3077–84a.
- 137 Orchard (2003a): 263. Similarly, Robinson suggests that the *Beowulf*-poet wished to “acknowledge his heroes’ damnation while insisting on their dignity”: Robinson (1985): 13.

and despite the parallels to the dragon-quelling saints in the hagiographies, we must remember that ultimately the future he leaves for his people is disaster: he is not, in the final analysis, a saviour, a bringer of peace in any lasting form.¹³⁸

The past, in this poem, really is a foreign country, both temporally and geographically. Not only are the events of the poem “in geardagum”, they are also not in the poet’s own land: not once is England, or indeed any part of the British Isles, mentioned in this poem. For the poet, the past is another country spiritually too. However much the poet and his audience might think back to the past with nostalgia as a time of glorious heroes, it was still, deeply and inexorably, foreign. While some aspects of it could well be adopted and admired profitably, it was nevertheless, at its core, alien, and ultimately hopeless in its prospects for the future—as long as heathendom ruled.¹³⁹

The tragedy of the past, as we see it in this poem, was twofold: the perpetual strife and the prevalence of the sin of murdering one’s kin; and the fact that even if one avoided such conflicts and lived an exemplary life, the afterlife was ultimately insecure. Although Beowulf might have been a ‘noble heathen’, free from many of the flaws of his world and anticipating in some ways the men of faith to come after him, his own fate was uncertain at best, and at the end of the poem we see that however much he may have preserved himself from most of the fatal flaws of his society, he was still a man only great “on *pæm* dæge *þysses* lifes”.¹⁴⁰ As he is buried with the heathen gold, which must remain “unnyt” to the people,¹⁴¹ we are left to wonder how useful his heroism was, and would be in the world of the poem’s present.

138 This is not, however, necessarily a criticism of Beowulf himself: he is *not* a saint, simply a good, if not yet Christian, human being. The criticism applies to the world in which he lives, which cannot know peace precisely because there are no saints, and no Christ, to provide respite from human strife. For a more positive, “heroic” reading of Beowulf than that presented here, see most recently Burrow (2008): 50–60, with further references; cf. also Greenfield (1985), and Robinson (1997), for some prominent exponents of a contrasting viewpoint.

139 See Robinson (1985) for similar arguments from a different perspective.

140 Benson (1967) is an important paper that anticipates some aspects of the argument presented here; on the sometimes contradictory attitudes of the theologians regarding the fate of pre-Christian pagans (and the remnants of their literature), see also Wormald (1978): 42–58, with a wealth of comparative material; and with reference specifically to *Beowulf*, see Robinson (1985): 12–13, *et passim*.

141 “useless” (*Beowulf*: 3168a).

Beowulf, Germanic Tradition, and the Anglo-Saxon Past

The fact that *Beowulf* is clearly a Christian work cannot be argued away; nor, however, can its close relationship to Germanic vernacular and originally oral traditions be denied. The poem alludes, primarily by the naming of various characters known from elsewhere, to a very wide world of quasi-historical narrative tradition; much of the material occurs again, much later, in Scandinavian narratives that cannot be shown to have any direct dependence on *Beowulf*, though how exactly these traditions relate to one another can also not be determined. It is certainly beyond dispute that this poem is very heavily steeped in a tradition shared by Norse legendary histories as well as mythological and heroic poetry, far more than is the case for *Waltharius*.¹⁴²

For our purposes, it is enough to recall that the *Beowulf*-poet's evocation of the dynasty of Scyld Scefing has parallels in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century texts recording the (historically extremely dubious) histories of the 'Skjöldungar' kings of Denmark, one of whom, Hrólfr kraki (possibly corresponding to the Scylding Hroðulf of *Beowulf*) was to become a major figure in Old Norse legend. Also mentioned in the Scandinavian material are other dynasties occurring in *Beowulf*: the Wulfings, and the Swedish royal line of Ongeneþeow.¹⁴³

142 A summary of the narrative elements that can be connected with other known Germanic traditions is provided by Fulk, Bjork, and Niles (2008): xxxvi–lcvii; clxix–xxii; clxxxiii–xv; suggested parallels and analogues are printed in the same edition (*Beowulf*: pp. 291–315). See also Orchard (2003a): 98–129, for further references to the Germanic background of this work and an analysis of their significance; and Andersson (1997) for an overview of the scholarship on influences ranging from Germanic to Virgil.

143 The earliest Scandinavian sources with mentions or narratives of these kings that provide names resembling those in *Beowulf* are of much later provenance: a twelfth-century genealogy (*Langfeðgatal*) (Kålund, ed. 1917–18); the *Chronicon Lethrense* (c.1170?) (Gertz, ed. 1917–18a: c. 3); Sven Aggesen's *Brevis historia regum Dacie* (c.1185–8) (Gertz, ed. 1917–18b: cc. 1–2); Saxo Grammaticus's *Gesta Danorum* (c.1208) (Friis-Jensen, ed. 2015: II.i.1–4; II.v.1–2; II.v.5–6; II.vi.1; II.vi.11; II.vii.1; II.vii.4–viii.1; VIII.v.1); the so-called 'prose' *Edda* attributed to Snorri Sturluson (c.1220) (Faulkes, ed. 1982–98: *Prologue* 9; 11; *Gylfaginning* 49; *Skáldskaparmál* 43; 44; 58); the *Ynglinga saga* in *Heimskringla* (c.1225–c.1235; *Heimskringla* is a compendium of biographies of Norwegian kings also attributed to Snorri Sturluson, of which *Ynglinga saga* is the first part) (Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, ed. 1941: 5; 23; 27; 29); and two poems from the so-called 'poetic' or 'elder' *Edda*, *Hyndluljóð*: 9.4; 11.5–6; 14.4; and *Grottasöngur*: 19; 22 (these two poems are found in the collection of mythological and heroic lays collected in the Codex Regius *Edda* manuscript dating to c.1275; although they were almost certainly composed a good deal before that date, it is impossible to be precise in this regard). All of these texts undoubtedly drew on some sort of oral sources, but there is no warrant for believing that these sources were unchanged 'oral tradition' predating

(Note that while a Scef occurs also in *Widsith*, he is there the ruler of the Langobards—a people not mentioned or alluded to in any form in *Beowulf*.¹⁴⁴) Not just the names, even some of the narrative elements in *Beowulf* seem to relate closely to Norse material, most especially to the fourteenth-century *Grettis saga*.¹⁴⁵ The figure of Sigemund the Wælsing with a nephew Fitela corresponds well to the Völsungr Sigmundr and his nephew Sinfiötli of the eddic poems and the *Völsunga saga* from thirteenth-century Iceland. We should note that in the saga account, Sigmundr's nephew is also his son by his incestuous relation with his sister;¹⁴⁶ and of course, in all other known traditions, the Völsungr who slays a dragon is Sigurðr (in Middle High German: Siegfried), Sigmundr's son. There is also a single passing reference—the only one to a non-Northern figure—to Eormenric,¹⁴⁷ presumably the Gothic king Ermanaric mentioned also in Jordanes and (as Jörmunrekr) in the Old Norse *Hamðismál*, and the Old English *Deor* and *Widsith*.¹⁴⁸ As in *Waltharius*, *Waldere* and *Deor*, there is also a reference to Weland.¹⁴⁹

The wide range of correspondences, the number of allusions, and the style and language, make it uncontroversial to state that this poem draws heavily on oral, vernacular traditions that circulated in some form in various Germanic vernaculars; it is also clear that there are particularly close links with (later)

Beowulf, or existing and accessible in oral form without much mutation from the time of *Beowulf*'s composition to the point at which the later texts were created.

144 See *Widsith*: 32.

145 Guðni Jónsson (ed. 1936). The parallels are stressed by Orchard (1995): 140–68; cf. Fjalldal (1998).

146 Finch (ed. and trans. 1965): 7. On the possible implications of this, see Orchard (2003a): 108–10.

147 *Beowulf*: 1201a.

148 *Getica* 116–20; *Hamðismál*: 3,1 *et passim*; *Deor*: 21–6; *Widsith*: 8; see further below at p. 262 with n. 78.

149 *Beowulf*: 455a. It is worth noting that neither character of Beowulf himself nor the narratives about him presented here are known from any other text. This has led to some scholars seeing the figure of Beowulf as having been 'invented' by the poet (see most prominently Frank 1991: 98, 100–1; and more recently Scheil 2008: 287). While it is entirely possible that there is no historical background to the figure of Beowulf himself, this has little bearing on the arguments presented here. As to whether he was a late invention by a late poet, Neidorf has recently presented cogent arguments to the effect that a heroic character by the name of 'Beowulf' and at least some elements of the narrative about him presented in *Beowulf* were "traditional" and would have been known by c.700, and were not, moreover, invented by the poet of *Beowulf*, even though both the character and his deeds might have been largely fictional and thus indeed invented at some point (probably before the migration to England) by some poet (Neidorf 2012).

Scandinavian traditions. This should not be taken to mean, though, that these traditions themselves represented some sort of unmodified blast from the pagan past; and we should remember that the “least disputed correspondence” between *Beowulf* and another vernacular text is that between *Beowulf* and the Anglo-Saxon *Genesis A*,¹⁵⁰ an indisputably Christian literary work, though in equally indisputably vernacular language and style that must derive from pre-Christian traditions.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, as pointed out above, the works with which *Beowulf* has most in common in terms of phrasing are all undeniably and fundamentally Christian.

While the various correspondences with secular vernacular material in *Beowulf* make it clear that the poet was aware of and drew on a wide range of secular oral tradition, there is little historical underpinning for most of these narrative threads (even less than is the case with *Waltharius* and Burgundian history), and other sources with analogous material are almost universally from much later. There is only one element in the text that is generally agreed to be historical: the description of the raid on the Franks by Hygelac, king of the Geats. This is thought to refer to an event recorded by Gregory of Tours, who states that a Dane called Chlochilaichus was killed in a raid sometime in the early sixth century.¹⁵² Like the other figures of the Germanic material briefly mentioned above, there is nothing to connect Hygelac with the histories of the Anglo-Saxons; like most of the material of *Beowulf*, he seems to belong, therefore, not just to the distant past, but also to an ‘other’ past.¹⁵³

There are, however, various figures in *Beowulf* who appear to be connected to names mentioned not just in later Norse material, but also in Anglo-Saxon historical sources. The *ASC*, Asser’s *Vita Alfredi*, and Æthelweard’s *Chronicon* (based on the *ASC*), all compiled before or shortly after 1000, list as ancestors of

150 Andersson (1997): 144.

151 It is important to note that this influence of pre-Christian tradition is not restricted to literature in the vernacular: it is equally true of Christian Latin verse, which is influenced primarily by Virgil and Ovid; and even Latin prose was heavily influenced by a number of pre-Christian Latin writers. This did not, for the most part, appear to pose a problem to the Latin writers of the period (mainly clerics), so there is no particular reason to expect or perceive a greater level of difficulty posed by the pre-Christian character of an inherited vernacular tradition.

152 *Beowulf*: 2910–15; *DLH*: III, 3. A cognate name, Huggleikr, is given to a king of the Swedes in the *Ynglinga saga* in the *Heimskringla* (Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, ed. 1941: 22), but his brief life seems to have nothing remotely to do with that of Hygelac.

153 It is worth noting here that Hygelac occurs also in the *Liber monstrorum*, as a monster; cf. Orchard (1995) on the monstrousness of *Beowulf* and his connection with other monsters; on the *Liber monstrorum* more generally, see Orchard (1995): 86–115.

King Æthelwulf (c.795–858) a number of figures—as far as we know unhistorical—with names similar to Scyld (in these works written as Sceaaldwa, Scyldwa or Sceldwa), Heremod, and Beow, as well as a historical Ingeld; all these names also occur in *Beowulf*.¹⁵⁴ The *ASC*, and Sven Aggesen and Saxo Grammaticus's Danish histories, also tell us about an Offa, in the *ASC* fourth in line of descent from Woden and ancestor of later Anglo-Saxon rulers; and an Offa occurs in *Beowulf* too.¹⁵⁵ In *Beowulf*, Heremod is the clearly negative exemplum sung of by the “scop” immediately after the song about Sigemund,¹⁵⁶ and Ingeld is the lord of the Heaðobards, and betrothed to Hroðgar's daughter.¹⁵⁷ Like Scyld and Scef, Heremod and Ingeld also occur in Scandinavian legend, and Ingeld might have been known in more detailed narratives in Anglo-Saxon England too, given that Alcuin notoriously feels that he has nothing to do with Christ.¹⁵⁸ In the Anglo-Saxon genealogies, however, all of these figures are placed within a biblical context, ultimately descending from Adam; we should note also, though, that they are in turn not just ancestors of historically attested Anglo-Saxon kings, but also of Woden.¹⁵⁹ Although there is no figure called Geat in *Beowulf*, the hero belongs to the people of the Geats, so it is interesting that the genealogies record a Geat, and both Asser's biography of Alfred and the *Historia*

154 *ASC*: Ingeld, Beaw, Scyld, Heremod, Scef [only in *B*, *C*, and *D*] (*ABD*: s.a. 855; *C*: s.a. 856); Asser: Ingeld, Beaw, Scyld, Heremod (Stevenson, ed. 1959: 2–3); Æthelweard: Ingeld, Beaw, Scyld, Scef (Campbell, ed. 1962: 32–3). We should note that Beow, Scyld's son in *Beowulf*, is in the manuscript called Beowulf; this would disturb the metre at 53b, but not at 18a. Editors generally emend to Beow in both instances, largely on the basis of the extraneous genealogical material.

155 *ASC* (*ABC*), s.a. 626; Sven Aggesen: Gertz (ed. 1917–18): c. 2; Saxo: Friis-Jensen (ed. 2015): IV. ii,1; IV. iv,1–11; *Beowulf*: 1931b–62. It is unclear whether—and unlikely that—this figure has a real historical antecedent, but the *ASC* also records historical people—in the eighth century with the same name, which suggests that like a narrative of a ‘Beowulf’, narratives of an ‘Offa’ were known at the time.

156 *Beowulf*: 901–15.

157 *Beowulf*: 2023.

158 Dümmler (ed. 1895): ep. 124, p. 183; for discussion of this passage, see Chapter 7 at n. 23. Mary Garrison has argued that Alcuin most likely refers here to the performance of genealogies, and his point is that bishops should not have too close relationships with kings, or provide patronage of royal memorial or propaganda works (Garrison 2005). While accepting the latter part of the argument, we should nevertheless note that Alcuin's disapproval does not mean that no narrative material about Ingeld was known, and in fact suggests the opposite.

159 On the significance of the descent from Noah and Adam in the genealogies, see Anlezark (2006): 240–73.

Brittonum state explicitly that he had been worshipped as a god.¹⁶⁰ A further figure who receives only passing mention in *Beowulf*, Hengest,¹⁶¹ is of some importance for Anglo-Saxon historiography: he and his brother are said to have been at the head of the expedition that first brought the Anglo-Saxons to England.¹⁶² Hengest is also, at least in the *Historia Brittonum*, a descendant of Geat;¹⁶³ in Bede, however, he descends from Woden, of whom Bede says “de cuius stirpe multarum provinciarum regum genus originem duxit.”¹⁶⁴

It is clear that traditions of some sort regarding people bearing these names were current in Christian Anglo-Saxon England, from the ninth century at the latest (and in the case of Hengest, at least from the early eighth century). Obviously, none of these figures were actually attested in the Bible, or in any contemporary Latin sources; because of its allusions to them, therefore, *Beowulf* fits into a context—similar in some ways to that of the continental ‘national’ histories—of an attempt to unite oral narratives of a pre-Christian, barbarian history with the written traditions of a present that was Christian, Latinate, and more or less Romanised (in terms of authoritative language, religion, and institutions).

The genealogical material, like *Beowulf* itself, was clearly written by clerics, and in both cases it is legitimate to ask why they should record material containing a pagan deity and pagan Anglo-Saxon leaders. One explanation is a resort to euhemerisation, because it would have been too difficult to falsify the claims to authority of the ruling monarchs that derived from native, vernacular, oral tradition, which encompassed pre-Christian narratives.¹⁶⁵ This seems more than likely, and thus the Anglo-Saxon material might appear to be in

160 Stevenson (ed. 1959): 3; *Hist. Brit.*: § 31.

161 *Beowulf*: 1083a; 1091a; 1096b; 1127b.

162 It is not, of course, certain that the Hengest referred to in *Beowulf* must have something to do with the character in the migration myth, but given the latter's central place in Anglo-Saxon histories, it seems most likely that audiences would associate the Hengest in *Beowulf*, located in a place where the Hengest of the migration myth came from, with the leader of the Anglo-Saxons who first came to Britain in the accounts of the *HE*, *Hist. Brit.* and *ASC*.

163 *Hist. Brit.*: § 31.

164 “From whose lineage the royal family of many provinces traced its origin” (*HE*: I.xv,2). On the function of the genealogies, and their possible origins, see fundamentally Dumville (1977a). Hengest also descends from Woden in the so-called Anglian genealogies from the end of the eighth century (Dumville 1976); the other figures in *Beowulf* do not feature in these lists.

165 Fulk (2002): 235. On euhemerisation, see also the discussion and further references given in Chapter 1 at n. 81.

some manner akin to what we have found in the ‘national’ histories examined above, in that both seek to stress continuity with the pre-Christian past rather than the cleavage between past and present. We should remember, however, that from Anglo-Saxon England, all that exists for these distant ancestors is genealogies: there is hardly any narrative regarding the pre-migration Anglo-Saxon rulers.¹⁶⁶ *Beowulf* is in fact the only text that could be said to fill this gap: it is what provides us with a narrative of peoples clearly related (in the Anglo-Saxon genealogies at any rate)—through figures such as Scyld and Hengest—to the Anglo-Saxons, before they came to Britain, and before they became Christian.¹⁶⁷

It is perhaps worthwhile stressing that in *Beowulf*, although the allusions to a wider world of legend and myth are just as significant as in the other vernacular material we have examined, they are restricted, with the single exception of Ermanaric, to northern Europe;¹⁶⁸ there is no reference to any of the legendary figures from central, southern, and eastern Europe so popular in other vernacular (and occasionally Latin) material, even in Anglo-Saxon England. Furthermore, regardless of when one dates this poem, by the time the extant copy was written, there had been at least two centuries of fairly involved interaction between the peoples along the North Sea and in Scandinavia, and substantial Danish and Norse settlement in England; the Anglo-Saxons, moreover, themselves had some historical roots around the area that is now Denmark or northern Germany and probably Frisia.¹⁶⁹ The Goths, Huns, Lombards, and Burgundians that we encounter in the other vernacular poems had no discernible relation to the ethnic groups that must have been the audiences of those texts. *Beowulf*, therefore, unlike all the vernacular poems that treat of (quasi-)historical material from this period, but like the ‘national’ histories we have examined, seems to restrict itself to material that had,

166 The exception is provided by the material on Offa, ruler of the Angles, which takes up nine lines in *Widsith*, and about 30 lines in *Beowulf*: *Widsith*: 35–44; *Beowulf*: 1931b–62. The historicity of this figure is debatable, and unlike the instances of other probably ahistorical figures of a pre-migration past that we find in, for example, Jordanes, the Frankish Trojan myth, and the *HL* and *OGL*, there is in this case no actual narrative that provides the bridge between the life ‘over there’ and the post-migration era.

167 Note, though, that the portion of *Beowulf* containing Hengest is the so-called “Finnsburg Episode”, which overlaps with the narrative in the *Fight at Finnsburg*; the mention of Hengest in two poems attests to a narrative tradition concerning his life before any migration to Britain—assuming that we are here dealing with the same Hengest.

168 This is if we see Scef as Danish, as he is in *Beowulf*, and not as a Lombard as in *Widsith*.

169 On Scandinavians in England, see Hadley (2006); Hunter Blair (2003): 55–115; 166–72; and Nelson (2003); on English responses to the Vikings, see also Page (1987).

potentially, a discernible relation to what the audience might have thought of as 'our' past.

By the inclusion of Hengest, who is one of the major figures of the Anglo-Saxon foundational migration myth, and other figures who have significant places in the Anglo-Saxon genealogies—and therefore, we may assume, in Anglo-Saxon historical consciousness—*Beowulf* implicitly makes itself a text relating to the pre-migration Anglo-Saxon past, in a manner that *Waltharius* and *Waldere*, the texts to be examined in the following chapter, and later vernacular heroic material do not, with regard to their material and their audiences. *Beowulf*, in other words, comes closest to being the narrative of the pre-Christian, non-Roman, and pre-insular past of the Anglo-Saxons.¹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, this is not—unlike the stories examined in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 above—a narrative that brings the people to which its audience belongs from 'there' to their present home, nor even one that draws an explicit link between its subject matter and its audience. Furthermore—and this is something *Beowulf* has in common with the 'national' histories we have examined—this past should not be viewed as in opposition to the Christian, Roman inheritance: the genealogies, after all, include Scyld, Hengest and Woden, within a line stretching back to Noah and Adam.

As in the other texts we have examined, it might be the case that in *Beowulf* too, there is no clear demarcation between the pagan Germanic and the pagan Roman past: at least in its manuscript context, *Beowulf* may profitably be viewed against a background of criticism of both Germanic and classical pagan heroes, including not just Beowulf, but also Alexander, all of whom fight against supernatural enemies and appear to be somewhat monstrous themselves.¹⁷¹ In *Beowulf*, the description of the dragon's lair shares some (albeit very slight) resemblance to depictions of Roman ruins in other Anglo-Saxon works;¹⁷² and Beowulf's last rites seem to have some similarities to Roman military funerals.¹⁷³ The Anglo-Saxons do not seem to have differentiated

170 In this context, see Scheil's reading of *Beowulf* as a historiographic text comparable to the works of Jordanes and Paul the Deacon (Scheil 2008).

171 Orchard (1995).

172 Thornbury (2000).

173 Hill (2007). As Hill notes, this does not mean that the poet knew or thought he was representing Roman rites; military funeral practices of the Romans undoubtedly influenced the many barbarians who made up much of the late Roman military, and if the *Beowulf*-poet was reflecting some memory of genuine pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon practice (as Hill argues), this need not have been known to be Roman. Even if Hill is wrong about the ethnic origins of the funeral rites, there is certainly a poetic truth in his belief in the appropriateness of the poem concluding "with a funeral which in its origins reflects

starkly between the ancient Roman and the ancient Germanic past,¹⁷⁴ though—unlike, for example, the Franks—they clearly drew their genealogical legitimation from the Germanic aspect of antiquity; it seems to be plausible to suggest that in terms of criticism of heroism too, the pagan pasts are equally to be condemned.

Beowulf seems simultaneously more deeply Christian and more concerned with the pagan past than *Waltharius* and the Latin 'national' histories examined above: certainly, it treats the difference in religion between past and present as a matter of greater concern than do the authors of any of those texts (or the compilers of the *ASC*). This might be partly precisely because *Beowulf* is not, certainly not in the first instance, a pragmatic text with any kind of current political purpose (as the 'national' histories arguably were), but a poetic work of art.¹⁷⁵ As Joseph Harris has suggested, it is something of a "summa litterarum", looking back at a whole tradition with a fair amount of nostalgia and admiration,¹⁷⁶ but also a sense of mourning for the irrecoverable loss of something that was, however flawed, nevertheless grandly awesome, without being completely capable of partaking of this tradition it both embodies and in some sense overcomes.¹⁷⁷ A work that is "culturally postheroic and retrospective", containing as it does elements of a wide range of genres, from varying traditions (pagan and Christian, barbarian and Roman, Latin and Germanic), *Beowulf* represents "the poet's 'reading' of antecedent literature".¹⁷⁸

Unlike the other extant vernacular heroic material from the period, *Beowulf* is not a more or less simple reflection of secular (primarily orally transmitted) material or traditions about the past, however much those traditions might have been, even in the other texts, infused by the values and inheritance of Christian culture. Nor is it, in contrast to most of the Latin histories examined above, a direct effort to provide an authoritative version of a past cherished by the ruling class as a means of establishing a sense of origins and continuity with a distant past (possibly with some sort of legitimising function), which therefore, once again, presents that past in

the blending of the customs of two peoples and two cultures in a harmonious and dignified whole" (Hill 2007: 335).

174 Hunter (1974).

175 I find the arguments of Richard North, to the effect that *Beowulf* was in fact composed as a propaganda-text for a Mercian ealdorman named Wiglaf, hard to follow: North (2007); cf. Lapidge (2007), and Owen-Crocker (2007).

176 Similarly also Frank (1982).

177 Harris (1985); Harris (1992); Harris (2000); see also similarly Robinson (1985).

178 Harris (2000): 161; 163.

largely unreflective terms, with problematic elements being heavily concealed. Rather, this work is a highly (self-)reflexive discourse with the past, in which the poet, more or less deliberately, presents to his audience that past as the problem that it could potentially be¹⁷⁹—if one were to choose to dwell on how incompatible it might be with what claimed to be the authoritative moral discourse of the time (regardless of whether that time was the eighth or the tenth century), that of the Church. But if the text is a reflection on the sin of pride inherent in the heroes of the past,¹⁸⁰ it is not devoid of a sense of admiration for their achievements;¹⁸¹ and—more important in the present context—the criticism of the social mores could certainly apply to the secular values of the early medieval aristocracy as well, which was almost exclusively made up of a warrior class, and maintained its position through the sword, not the book.

If *Beowulf* might be read in Christian terms as criticism of pride, heroism, and war, it is nevertheless a fact that war—and often between related families—was a frequent facet of early medieval political life, and successful Christian rulership depended to a considerable extent on the ability to lead in battle just as much as successful pagan rulership had done earlier.¹⁸² Criticism is therefore probably as applicable to the secular mores of the present as those of the past; that being the case, one must wonder also to what extent those values that are criticised might nevertheless have held an important place among the secular aristocracy who might have been the audience of *Beowulf*—and from whose traditions, we must presume, the poet got his raw material.¹⁸³ In other words, if the pagan, heroic past was problematic, some of the concerns surrounding it also probably attached to the Christian secular society that cultivated a memory of that past.

We have seen above that while in the ‘national’ histories, the potentially problematic aspects of the barbarian past are generally elided or glossed over quickly, in *Waltharius*, the potentially problematic nature of the secular, military values embodied in the narrative are, in a sense, denatured by the parodistic approach of the text’s author. *Beowulf* appears to be one of the few texts

179 Similarly also Robinson (1985).

180 Orchard (1995).

181 Harris (1985); Orchard (2003a); Robinson (1985).

182 Halsall (2003): 20–33. On the militarisation of the aristocracy in this period more generally, see also Sarti (2013); Wickham (2005): 174–8; 210–11; 257–8; Wickham (2009): 187–91; and see further the references given in the context of the discussion of *Waltharius*, Chapter 5, nn. 88, 90, 92.

183 Wormald (1978): 65–7.

from the period that both presents a narrative of a barbarian past and the value system it contained at some length and with some level of admiration, while also not shying away from its potentially problematic implications for the present—though to be sure, because no explicit link is made between that past and the present, the discomfort such a connection might have provoked is arguably reduced.

Vernacular Oral Tradition and The ‘Germanic’ Past

From the late sixth century till the end of the eighth, the written culture of western Europe was confined almost exclusively to the spheres of ecclesiastical learning and pragmatic literacy. If one excludes documentary material, the vast majority of texts surviving from this period belong to the realm of religious production of some form; this includes even historical works, the majority of which were composed to present definite religious views (though this fact does not exclude political functions for such texts). The histories examined in chapters two to four are not free of religious influence; they are nevertheless among the relatively few Latin narratives of the period that are primarily secular in their function. We should not be blinded by the weight of the number of manuscripts and texts, however: while there was certainly no vast gulf between the secular and clerical elites, the former would have had a cultural education different from that dictated by religious doctrine, and the secular aristocracy's sense of the past would also not have been bound by strictly religious concerns. Early medieval historical consciousness would therefore necessarily have contained much that is not extant in texts presenting a more ecclesiastical viewpoint.

This secular elite historical consciousness must have been manifest primarily in an oral form, influenced, to be sure, by Latin literary culture, but not by this alone. The Latin ‘national’ histories examined above are evidence of the assertion of a secular historical consciousness within a literate, Latinate, Church-dominated context; hence their efforts to stress continuity and smooth over what might appear to us to be significant breaks in history, which were also perceived thus in the works of other, more strictly religious writers such as Bede. Although it is generally difficult to prove direct dependence on oral sources, we have nevertheless seen that material is included in these histories that could only be derived from an oral milieu, even if, as was the case with the Frankish origin myth, the oral material itself was ultimately based on Latin texts.

More importantly, we have seen that despite the often competing influence of ecclesiastical thought and the weight of written, Roman tradition, the sense of continuity with a barbarian and often pre-Christian past was sufficiently strong that it needed to be written, in Latin, and in a way that stressed this continuity, often at the expense of the significance of the conversion to Catholic Christianity and the concomitant condemnation of the pre-Catholic

past. That these histories were written, and in Latin, is an acknowledgement both of the importance of a historical consciousness rooted in secular values and traditions, as well as of the authority of the Latin written word. It is also evidence of a vibrant interface between the clerical, Latinate culture of those who wrote these narratives, and a secular, largely vernacular culture of the lay elites who ruled the kingdoms of which these are the histories. We should note further that although these historical texts providing a primarily secular viewpoint are few in number (relative to the total corpus of non-documentary written matter surviving from our period), they were nevertheless very popular, and continued to be copied well after the end of our period.¹

Works like *Waltharius* and *Beowulf* were less popular than the 'national' histories, judging from the manuscript survivals—but this says nothing regarding the popularity of any oral antecedents. Narratives such as these are further examples of the existence of this secular, largely vernacular culture and historical consciousness, and also of its close connections with Latin and ecclesiastical approaches to the past. They attest to a discourse about the distant past that took place primarily in an oral culture, but was deeply influenced by Latin learning. As we have seen, the relationship of these texts to the extant Latin historical narratives that cover the same material (to the extent to which any do) is uncertain, but both *Beowulf* and *Waltharius* show that there were independent traditions about the past that differed from the Latin histories, in terms of the stories told, the identification of the characters, and the chronological location of people and events.

Unfortunately, because the secular historical culture was largely oral, little evidence of it survives beyond *Waltharius* and *Beowulf*, and what was incorporated into the Latin histories. There are two categories of sources for an oral secular historical culture: narratives which have made the transfer from an oral to a literate milieu; and references to such oral narratives that were not written, or do not survive in written form. *Waltharius* and *Beowulf* are the only two substantial extant texts that belong to the first category, but most of the works examined above do contain some kind of references to or recordings of otherwise unwritten oral narratives. In the Latin histories, it is extremely difficult to decipher what derives from a genuine oral source, and what does not; nevertheless, Paul and Jordanes both seem to cite some originally orally transmitted stories, and the Trojan

1 For knowledge of Jordanes's *Getica*, Fredegar, the *LHF* and Paul's *HL* in the ninth century and later, see Innes (2000): 243–4; Lapidge (2006): 160; 239; 272; McKitterick (1989): 238–41; McKitterick (2004b): 13–15; 37–8; 49–51; 55–8; 75–83; 201; 212. Isidore's *HG* did not enjoy a wide reception.

origin myth probably underwent some transformations in a milieu of informal oral speculation.

The remaining narrative material from the ninth and tenth centuries is extremely fragmentary, with a new flourishing of the writing of oral-derived narratives beginning only from around the new millennium. The evidence from the ninth and tenth centuries comprises only five short vernacular poems (*Deor*, the *Fight at Finnsburg*, *Widsith*, and *Waldere* in Old English; and the Old High German *Hildebrandslied*).² In addition, we have a number of (mainly disapproving) references to what might be some kind of historical oral narratives, which do not, however, tell us anything about what these narratives contained, or even what value they had for their audiences.

In this chapter, I first present an overview of the evidence available for vernacular oral historical narratives. I next consider the value in the ninth and tenth centuries of what is often considered the 'Germanic' past, and whether in fact it is appropriate to think of these narratives as 'Germanic' in anything more than a linguistic sense. I shall examine the extent to which it is legitimate to speak of a secular, vernacular, oral historical consciousness as clearly distinct from clerical traditions of written Latin historiography, and the value the distant past might have had for the lay elite in this period. An important part of my argument will be the issue of language: it is a striking fact that in all of those regions where the historical equivalents of 'Germanic' heroes such as the Goths Theoderic the Great and Ermanaric and the Burgundian Guntharius had lived, the language spoken by the ninth century was no longer a Germanic one; in most cases, the Germanic vernacular had largely disappeared from common use well before the ninth century. Moreover, with the exception of the legend of Walter, Germanic legends do not survive in the Romance languages, and the Romance reflexes of the Walter material are very different from what we find in all the Germanic vernaculars. Although there were written narratives about the Gothic and Burgundian kings in Latin histories, the fact that there seem never to have been any Romance traditions about them suggests that their popularity in narratives among Germanic speakers around 800 and later (exclusively in regions quite distinct from where the narratives are set, and not inhabited by Goths or Burgundians) derives not primarily from written Latin sources, but from oral narratives in Germanic vernaculars.

2 The *Fight at Finnsburg* is a reflex of an underlying tale that also occurs in *Beowulf* (1068–1159), and is not considered independently here; Hengest is discussed above in chapter six.

Oral Vernacular Historical Material

Deor

Deor is an Old English poem of 42 lines recorded in the second half of the tenth century in the manuscript known as the *Exeter Book*.³ It comprises seven stanzas of unequal length, each of which is followed by a refrain. The first stanza is on Weland; the second on Beaduhild; the third on Mathild; the fourth on Theoderic; the fifth on Ermanaric; the sixth on an anonymous depressed man; and the seventh on the poet himself. No stanza can truly be called narrative; however, each contains allusions to figures that cannot be made sense of without prior knowledge of some sort of narrative concerning them.⁴ The stanza on Ermanaric will suffice as an example:

We geascodan Eormanrices
 wylfenne geþoht; ahte wide folc
 Gotena rices. Ðæt wæs grim cyning.
 Sæt secg monig sorgum gebunden,
 wean on wenan, wyscte geneahhe
 þæt þæs cynerices ofercumen wære.⁵

All we know from this is that Ermanaric was a Gothic king, and that his men were miserable and wished him overthrown. The stanza on Theoderic, similarly, only tells us that it was known to many that he ruled the "Mæringa burg", an otherwise unknown and unidentifiable location, for thirty years.⁶ In order

3 This codex, written c.965–c.1000, is a collection of Old English poetic works, primarily religious, but also including, apart from *Deor* and *Widsith*, a number of riddles and some wisdom poetry. On the manuscript and its contents, see *ASPR* III: ix–lxvii; Muir (ed. 2000): 1–41.

4 Introductions to *Deor* are to be found in Fulk and Cain (2003): 216–17; Greenfield and Calder (1986): 47; 295–6; Harris (1987); North (1994); and the introduction and notes in Malone (ed. 1977).

5 "We learnt of Ermanaric's wolfish thought; he had a great army of the Gothic kingdom; that was a grim king. Many a warrior sat bound up in sorrows, expecting misery, [and] wished frequently that the kingdom be overthrown" (*Deor*: 21–6).

6 *Deor*: 19a. Edith Marold suggests that this refers to the region known to German-speakers as "Meran" in the middle ages: Histria, Croatia, and Dalmatia (Marold 1988: 165–6). This area corresponds roughly to the region where the Ostrogothic Theoderic came from, before he conquered Italy. According to Marold, this becomes the location of his exile because in the legend (as we will see in the *Hildebrandslied*), Theoderic is understood as having been exiled from Italy by Odoacer, but returns to conquer Italy; thus his historical homeland becomes the place of exile, but both in history and legend it is where he set out from for Italy.

to comprehend these allusions, an audience would have had to associate the figures mentioned here with some sort of narratives, however brief; given that Weland, Theoderic, and Ermanaric also occur elsewhere in the corpus of Old English literature, it is reasonable to assume that the poet of *Deor* does indeed count on a general awareness of who these figures were. *Deor* has also been read as a philosophical poem of consolation, inspired by Boethius;⁷ the link is tenuous, but it does seem to be most likely that the “dryhten” (“lord”) referred to in the poem is the Christian God.⁸

Widsith

Widsith, a poem of 144 lines also recorded only in the *Exeter Book*, is even more allusive than *Deor*. It is a poet’s report of his travels among various peoples, and the many kings he has encountered, but it contains almost no narrative, comprising almost exclusively names of kings, qualified by geographical markers and epithets of praise.⁹ The poem mentions, among others, the Goth Ermanaric; the Burgundians Gifca and Guðhere; a Sceaƿ who ruled the Lombards; a number of other names also occurring in *Beowulf* (for example, Hroðwulf, Hroðgar, Offa, Ongenþeow); Ingeld (his ethnic identity is not given); and Alboin the Lombard and his father Audoin (Ælfwine and Eadwine). There are a host of other figures who are said to have ruled people we can identify as Germanic-speaking. However, we cannot simply categorise this poem as a ‘Germanic’ cultural artefact, presenting fragmentary memorial traditions about a ‘Germanic’ heritage: also contained in *Widsith* are mentions of a number of non-Germanic speakers, including Alexander and Caesar.¹⁰ Furthermore, the poet claims to have practised his art among several peoples who did not even belong within the Latin Christian sphere, including the Hebrews, Indians, Egyptians, Medes, and Persians.

As was the case with *Deor*, we see that *Widsith* also counts on the knowledge of some sort of narrative traditions concerning various non-Roman, non-biblical, and in some cases most likely pre-Christian figures,¹¹ but it is apparent also

7 Greenfield and Calder (1986): 296.

8 *Deor*: 32a.

9 Malone’s extensive commentary and notes remain an indispensable source of information, even if his interpretations are not always reliable (Malone, ed. 1962). In addition, see Fulk and Cain (2003): 217–20; Greenfield and Calder (1986): 146–8; Hill (1994); Neidorf (2013a); Niles (2007).

10 *Widsith*: 15 (Alexander); 20; 76–8 (Caesar, ruler of Rome and the Greeks).

11 Hill (1994) suggests, however, that the mentioning of names need not in all cases imply a broader knowledge of narratives attached to those names. This is possibly the case with many of the names in *Widsith* about which there are no records elsewhere, but it seems

that characters who could only have been known ultimately (and quite possibly also immediately) from written sources, and have nothing whatsoever to do with any kind of 'Germanic' tradition, are happily cast into a larger pantheon of great figures of the past without distinction between 'Germanic' and Roman or biblical traditions.¹² While it is certainly the case, therefore, that this poem does contain a wide range of allusions to 'Germanic' figures, to suggest that it is evidence of the existence of any "pan-Germanic identity" seems overhasty, as such a view cannot account for the clearly non-Germanic figures in the poem.¹³ It seems more to be the case that this poem conjures up a distant past peopled with great warriors, including many who have Germanic names as well as many who do not. What is perhaps more important about it might be the suggestion it provides that the martial (or even 'heroic') values that, it is probably reasonable to assume, these figures were thought to embody, continued to be sufficiently important among the laity that such a poem could be recorded even in what is manifestly a clerical context, surrounded by clearly religious works.

Both *Deor* and *Widsith* are poems that are, precisely because of their almost exclusively allusive nature, extremely hard to interpret. Their place within Old English literary history need not detain us here; what is important is that they, like *Beowulf* and *Waldere*, clearly draw on secular historical traditions about figures of the past, which would have been transmitted orally in the vernacular. Nevertheless, both also show evidence of contact between the spheres of written, Christian learning and the oral vernacular milieu of the secular aristocracy. *Widsith* in particular betrays a blurring of boundaries between what we might think of as secular, oral, and 'Germanic' spheres, and the learned, Christian, Roman, and Latin inheritance of Anglo-Saxon England; and it does so in a manner that suggests that for the poet (and probably his audience), these borders were in fact not very sharply drawn at all. The heroic ethos that the figures in these poems might have represented was, it would appear from the example of *Widsith*, not seen as an exclusively 'Germanic' one, and in terms

to be reasonable to assume that figures also occurring in other works were indeed more widely known, with some sort of narrative attached to them.

- 12 Given the extensive recording of Christian and Latin-derived material in the vernacular in Anglo-Saxon England, there is no need to suppose that these figures are immediately derived from any Latin texts; the sources could very well be Old English written works.
- 13 Cf. Neidorf (2013a): 174, *et passim*. Neidorf's arguments regarding "pan-Germanic identity" will be discussed further below; his more specific statements regarding *Widsith*—namely that the poem contained references to figures known in Anglo-Saxon England because of transfers of material into the Anglo-Saxon dialects that must have taken place in a very early period—are entirely compatible with the views set out in the present work.

of the cultural heritage of the audience, the poet appears to expect some knowledge of and possibly equal significance attached to other, non-‘Germanic’ characters as well.

Hildebrandslied

The Old High German *Hildebrandslied* is a fragmentary lay of 68 lines telling of a battle between Hildebrand and his son Hadubrand (not known from any earlier sources).¹⁴ It is preserved on two outside leaves of a manuscript otherwise containing biblical and patristic texts (in Latin), written at Fulda probably between 830 and 840, apparently by two different hands. It is thought to be a copy from a now lost exemplar, and is composed in an unusual mix of several Germanic dialects.¹⁵ It is important in our context because Hildebrand is said to have been in exile for thirty years; he fled with Theoderic when the latter had to escape Odoacer’s hostility.¹⁶ No more is said of Theoderic, but the allusion would seem to assume some prior knowledge of who he was, and why he had to flee from Odoacer. Given the manuscript context, it seems certain that the poem was known in a monastic environment, where Latin historical material on Theoderic would probably have been available, where Charlemagne’s appropriation of Theoderic’s statue for his palace at Aachen would almost certainly have been known (see below), but also where, manifestly, oral material touching on Theoderic, and probably also contradictory sixth-century accounts of his war with Odoacer circulated as well. It is further evidence of the existence of some sort of vernacular historical culture, which was, however, clearly accessible to monks who knew Latin, and would have had access to Latin historical material. There is no evidence to suggest that any oral background to the poem must date to the period of the events referred to; and as we shall see below, even the designation of this poem as necessarily belonging to a tradition that was Germanic in more than a linguistic sense—on the grounds not least of the reference to Theoderic—is not necessarily compelling.¹⁷

14 The best introduction remains Bostock (1976): 43–82; in addition, see Murdoch (1996): 34–46, as well as the more concise accounts in Haubrichs (1995): 116–27, and Kartschoke (2000): 125–30. A sensitive reading placing the poem in the context of a broader Germanic literary history is given by Harris (1988); see also McDonald (1984), and McLintock (1974) for insightful interpretations.

15 On the language, see Bostock (1976): 74–81; for comprehensive studies, see Luhr (1982); and Schwab (1972).

16 *Hildebrandslied*: 17–19.

17 Diether Schürr has recently argued forcefully in favour of a completely non-‘Germanic’, Christian reading of the poem: Schürr (2011); Schürr (2013); cf. e.g. Gottzmann (2003), and Ohlenroth (2005), for recent iterations of an opposing point of view.

References to Vernacular Historical Narratives

Apart from *Beowulf* and *Waltharius*, and the associated *Fight at Finnsburg* and *Waldere*, the poems outlined above comprise the total extant corpus of contemporary narrative material that we can reasonably claim reproduces in writing something of the vernacular oral historical traditions of (some of the) Germanic-speaking peoples of the ninth and tenth centuries that were concerned with the distant past. There exist also a number of more or less cryptic references to historical poetry of some sort, which tell us little about its content or function, but should nevertheless be noted as evidence of the existence of a historical consciousness parallel to that expressed in Latin histories.¹⁸ A number of comments in Latin texts demonstrate that there was some kind of oral secular culture that clerics habitually disapproved of, which encompassed, among other things, songs performed to the accompaniment of harp or zither.¹⁹ Only a small number of the references are unambiguously to historical material, and it is not always evident whether in these cases we are dealing with necessarily barbarian or even explicitly non-Christian narratives; or, rather, simply with secular material deemed inappropriate for a monastic context. It is clear, however, both that clerics indulged in secular pastimes of various sorts, including hunting, feasting, and listening to secular music; and that this was often condemned by senior churchmen as being unsuitable for those in religious orders.²⁰ It would be wise not to confuse a clerical condemnation of secular pursuits among the clergy with evidence for a necessarily 'barbarian' oral culture, by which I mean something containing pre-Christian and pre-Roman material.²¹ It is equally important to stress that the very condemnation voiced by someone like Alcuin shows that there was no divide between the secular and clerical spheres, however much some clerics might have wished it so.

Alcuin's famous question, "Quid Hinieldus cum Christo?," occurs in a letter addressed to a Mercian bishop in the 790 s.²² The context of these words is as follows:

-
- 18 I ignore here the historical poetry on relatively recent events, of which there are more examples in Old English, and one example in Old High German; there are also numerous such works in Latin. On this topic, see further below at n. 40.
 - 19 Much of the material is collected in Richter (1994): 125–58.
 - 20 Wormald (1978): 42–7.
 - 21 I differ here from the interpretation of Richter (1994); a better (though much less expansive) guide to much the same material (with a focus on Anglo-Saxon England) is Wormald (1978): 42–7, who discusses many of the same sources as Richter.
 - 22 I follow Bullough's interpretation; he thinks it is most probably addressed to Bishop Unuuona of Leicester (Bullough 1993). On this letter, in addition to Bullough (1993), see Garrison (2005); Wormald (1978): 43; 50–1.

Verba dei legantur in sacerdotali convivio. Ibi decet lectorem audiri, non citharistam; sermones patrum, non carmina gentilium. Quid Hinieldus cum Christo? Angusta est domus: utrosque tenere non potuit. Non vult rex caelestis cum paganis et perditis nominetenus regibus communionem habere; quia rex ille aeternus regnat in caelis; ille paganus plangit in inferno. Voces legentium audite in domibus tuis, non ridentium turbam in plateis.²³

It is clear from this letter that Alcuin feels that recitations of pagan material are unsuitable for an ecclesiastical context, and given the reference to Ingeld, it is reasonable to assume that he has in mind historical narratives about pre-Christian kings (though this might not be all that he believes is improper). Mary Garrison has argued that Alcuin's polemic is here directed against pagan songs, but also against king-lists in which pagan and Christian kings are juxtaposed, and we cannot necessarily infer from this letter that it is the "carmina gentilium" that have references to Ingeld and are therefore historical lays of some sort.²⁴ This is certainly a plausible suggestion; it does not alter the basic facts that oral historical traditions about pagan kings are here seen as inappropriate, and that they are sufficiently popular among clerics that Alcuin must specifically condemn them.

Michael Richter and Patrick Wormald, in their studies, adduced a number of further examples in which clerics state that one should not cultivate vernacular poetry or listen to a 'citharista'.²⁵ It is certainly possible that these references also imply the existence of vernacular historical or heroic poetry, but we cannot be certain about this: there are, after all, a number of other possible genres of secular song that might be deemed inappropriate entertainment for clerics. There is an explicit reference to songs about past kings in a life of St Ethelbert from a twelfth-century manuscript,²⁶ but no other such mentions survive from Anglo-Saxon

23 "Let the words of God be read at the banquet of priests. It is fitting that the lector be heard there, not the 'citharista'; the teachings of the fathers, not the songs of the pagans. What does Ingeld have to do with Christ? The house is small: it cannot contain both. The heavenly king does not wish to commune with so-called kings who are pagan and damned, for the king who is eternal reigns eternally in the heavens, and the pagan king cries out in hell. Hear the voices of the readers in your houses, not the crowd of laughing ones in the streets" (Dümmmler, ed. 1895: ep. 124, p. 183). I follow Garrison's emendation of 'audire' to 'audite' in the last line (Garrison 2005: 241).

24 Garrison (2005).

25 Richter (1994); Wormald (1978): 42–7.

26 James (ed. 1917): 238.

England. It is far from certain, moreover, that these songs about past kings must also be about pagan kings. There is no further evidence from Anglo-Saxon England for vernacular oral historical traditions, but given that, as we have seen above, texts exist that not only contain some historical material, but also allude to a wide range of figures extraneous to the main narratives of these texts, it seems certain that there was in fact a lively oral vernacular historical tradition on the island, but one that operated, as we see in all the extant texts, under significant influence of written, clerical culture.

More references to oral vernacular historical narratives survive from continental Francia. Most famous is Einhard's report that Charlemagne, just after his coronation, "barbara et antiquissima carmina, quibus veterum regum actus et bella canebantur, scripsit memoriaeque mandavit".²⁷ To be sure, Einhard models his work on Suetonius's biographies of the early Roman emperors—and, Matthew Innes suggests, on Tacitus's *Germania*.²⁸ But given that there does exist one lay from this period, the *Hildebrandslied*, which is certainly historical in nature, it seems plausible that there were in fact other vernacular historical poems in existence at the time known to Einhard, and probably also to Charlemagne, whether or not Charlemagne actually had any "barbara et antiquissima carmina" written.²⁹ There is no indication that these "veteres reges" need have been exclusively of Charlemagne's own family, or even Frankish.³⁰ It is not, however, entirely clear what is meant by the adjective

27 "He had written down the barbarian and most ancient songs in which the deeds and wars of the ancient kings were sung, and commanded that they be preserved for posterity" (Holder-Egger, ed. 1911: c. 29).

28 Chapters 26–9 of the *Vita Karoli* show Charlemagne performing various activities related to language, law, religion, the calendar and history, which are similar to Suetonius's descriptions of various emperors (cf. Ihm, ed. 1933: Caesar 40; 44; 56; Augustus 31; 34; Tiberius 26; Caligula 15; Claudius 41). Tacitus tells us that the Germani commemorated their past in song (Ogilvie and Winterbottom, eds 1975: 11,2). On these texts in relation to Einhard, see fundamentally Haubrichs (1989: 40–2); more generally on Suetonius in Carolingian letters, see Innes (1997); and Wood (2014); on Einhard and Tacitus, see also Innes (2000): 237–9. On the manuscript reception of Suetonius in this period, see most recently Kaster (2014).

29 It is possible that the *Hildebrandslied* was originally written as a result of Charlemagne's impulse, but this can never be more than speculation. What is certain is that the only extant exemplar cannot be seen as a part of a programmatic desire to record ancient barbarian songs: its existence on the fly-leaves of a manuscript with apparently completely unrelated texts clearly shows that the current manuscript context of the lay as we have it was not that of some sort of 'Heldenliederbuch Karls des Großen'.

30 Innes states that "the orally transmitted material to which Carolingian sources referred was thus resolutely royal, dynastic and Frankish" (Innes 2000: 240); this applies only to

‘barbarus’; the term certainly need not necessarily mean ‘pagan’. But it must refer either to vernacular songs, or to Latin songs about non-Roman (and probably Germanic-speaking) kings. In two other occurrences of the word in Einhard’s text it seems to be used with regard to the Germanic language, and in the fourth instance, it describes Einhard himself—who was a Germanic-speaker, though his identification of himself as “homo barbarus” occurs as part of the standard humility-*topos* of the preface, and the term should here not be loaded with too much significance.³¹

Charlemagne’s son Louis the Pious also apparently learnt pagan songs, according to his biographer Thegan: “poetica carmina gentilia, quæ in iuven-tute didicerat, respuit nec legere nec audire nec docere voluit”.³² That Louis learnt such songs in his youth seems to indicate a current interest in the court circles at the time, even if he repudiated them later. Whether these songs were Germanic or not is difficult to tell—it is conceivable that they might have been the “peregrinorum aliquid [...] morum, quibus difficulter expeditur aetas semel imbuta” that his father was worried Louis would learn while he was in Aquitaine,³³ in which case they might not have had anything to do with any Germanic tradition at all. A further reference to historical songs in a Germanic vernacular comes from the *Vita sancti Liudgeri*: Liudger, a missionary in Frisia, is said to encounter among the Frisians a blind singer

one of the references in Poeta Saxo (see below), and the panegyric poem *Ludwigslied*, but certainly not to Einhard, of whom we can only say that the songs referred to must be royal, but need not be dynastic or Frankish.

- 31 A thorough discussion of the passage’s various possible interpretations, as well as later reflexes in Thegan and Poeta Saxo, is given in Haubrichs (1989); he does not, however, consider all other uses of ‘barbarus’ in Einhard’s work. As Haubrichs notes, it occurs again in the same chapter with regard to the names of the months (Haubrichs 1987: 29), but it is not entirely clear from the context (albeit most likely) that it must here mean a Germanic vernacular. The other two instances of the word are in the preface, where Einhard refers to himself as a “homo barbarus” inexperienced in “Romana locutione” (which, given his command of Latin, tells us nothing of what the term is supposed to mean elsewhere), and finally when he tells us that Charlemagne conquered all the “barbaras ac feras nationes” who are “lingua [...] poene similes” and live in “Germania” between the Rhine and the Vistula, and the ocean and the Danube (Holder-Egger, ed. 1911: c. 15). This last instance of the word clearly links it to the vernacular language of what even Einhard must have recognised as Germanic-speaking peoples living in “Germania”.
- 32 “He spurned the pagan poetic songs that he had learnt in his youth and wished neither to read, nor to hear, nor to teach them” (Trempe, ed. and trans. 1995b: c. 19).
- 33 “Foreign customs [...] which are difficult to cast off at a mature age once they have been absorbed” (Trempe, ed. and trans. 1995a: c. 4).

by the name of Bernlef, who "antiquorum actus regumque certamina bene noverat psallendo promere".³⁴

There exist also some references to written Germanic poetry, in at least one instance unmistakably dealing with legendary matter. We have already seen that Louis the Pious in his maturity shunned not only listening to and teaching "carmina gentilia", but also *reading* them; this might be seen as a reference to written versions of non-religious Germanic poetry of some sort. The library catalogues of Reichenau contained two volumes of vernacular poetry ("De carminibus Theodiscae [*sic*] volumen I"; "In XXI. libello continentur XII carmina Theodiscae linguae formata"), and in another volume are, apart from a number of penitentials by various theologians, "carmina diversa ad docendum Theodiscam linguam".³⁵ These catalogue entries need not be taken as references to secular poetry; they might refer to religious verse such as the Old Saxon *Heliand*, particularly in the case of the songs used to teach the German language. There is no way of determining the content of any of these songs. In addition, however, we have the evidence of Flodoard of Rheims, who includes a letter of Fulco of Rheims from 893 in his history, which makes a clear reference to a written narrative about Ermanaric that, it appears, was in the vernacular: "subicit etiam ex libris Teutonicis de rege quodam Hermenrico nomine, qui omnem progeniem suam morti destinaverit".³⁶

There is some evidence also that in the ninth century, a tradition of historical vernacular poetry dealing with relatively recent events was still current. Poeta Saxo (writing in the 880s) refers to (probably vernacular; not necessarily Germanic) songs about Charlemagne's ancestors: "vulgaria carmina magnis/Laudibus eius avos et proavos celebrant,/Pippinos, Carolos, Hludowicos et Theodricos/Et Carlomannos Hlothariosque canunt"; "Necnon, quae veterum depromunt proelia regum,/barbara mandavit carmina litterulis".³⁷ It is not certain that the "vulgaria carmina" are identical with the "barbara carmina" in

34 "Knew well how to narrate to the accompaniment of a zither the deeds of the ancients and the battles of kings" (Diekamp, ed. 1881: c. 25). It is of course entirely possible that this reference, like that in Einhard, is dependent more on Tacitus than on any contemporary historical reality.

35 "One volume of German poetry"; "12 poems composed in the German language are contained in the 21st book"; "Various songs to teach the German language" (Lehmann, ed. 1918: 248 [catalogue of 821–2]; 260 [Reginbert's catalogue, 835–42]).

36 "He also adduces, from German books [a story about] a certain king by the name of Ermanaric, who caused the death of his whole lineage" (Stratmann, ed. 1998: IV,5, p. 383).

37 "Vernacular [?] songs celebrated with great praise his grandfathers and great-grandfathers, they sang of the Pippins, Charleses, Ludwigs and Theoderics and the Carlomanns and Lothars"; "Moreover, those barbarian songs that depicted the battles of the ancient

these lines; the latter reference is most likely derived from Einhard, though this need not mean that no songs of the ancient past were sung, and indeed suggests that a contemporary audience in the late ninth century would have found the idea of such songs plausible. The reference to “vulgaria carmina” provides information not contained in Einhard, namely that vernacular songs celebrated Charlemagne’s ancestors; but Einhard’s “veteres reges” are not necessarily equivalent to Poeta Saxo’s “avi et proavi”.³⁸ In addition to the Saxon poet, the existence of the *Ludwigslied*,³⁹ a poem of uncertain genre that praises the exploits of a young Carolingian king in his battles against the vikings to save his people, is testament to a still existing vernacular tradition of historical poetry in the 880s.⁴⁰

Vernacular poetry about very recent events is not, of course, the same thing as vernacular poetry about the distant past. But the cumulative evidence of all the references above, when taken together with the brief, allusive vernacular narratives that do survive, and *Waltharius*, *Beowulf*, and Paul’s statement that songs about Alboin were sung among the Saxons and Bavarians,⁴¹ suggests that there was in fact a continuing practice of historical poetry of some kind in the Germanic vernaculars both on the continent and in England, containing narratives about past warriors or kings (who often belonged to peoples quite different from those among whom these stories were preserved), mostly performed and transmitted orally, though also sometimes written down.⁴² This sort of poetry met with a mixed reaction: while some clerics clearly enjoyed

kings he commanded to [be written] in letters” (von Winterfeld, ed. 1899: V,117–20; V,545–6).

38 Haubrichs (1989): 37–8.

39 Braune and Ebbinghaus (eds 1994): 136–8.

40 Scholars have been uncertain as to whether the *Ludwigslied* should be placed in the genre of praise-poetry or heroic lay; I myself find such genre distinctions unhelpful as the few extant works appear to sit uncomfortably on the boundaries constructed by modern scholarship. Another such work is the Old English *Battle of Maldon* (Scragg, ed. 1981). On the genre of the *Ludwigslied* and *Maldon*, in comparison with works in other Germanic languages, cf. Beck (1974), and Szarmach (1993). More broadly on the problem of genre definition of historical poetry in the Germanic languages, see Ebenbauer (1988); Ghosh (2007): 239–48; Harris (2012): 268–72; Reichl (2000): 70–3. The classic statement remains Heusler (1943): 123–74.

41 *HL*: I,27.

42 Enough survives from England to make the statement above largely uncontroversial, but cf. Frank (1991). With regard to the continent, the scholarship on this subject is vast, diffuse, and not always very helpful. The most relevant works for my purposes are Geuenich (1983), Haubrichs (1989), and Innes (2000), all of which deal with the issue of historical poetry, but provide often widely diverging perspectives. The standard surveys of Old High

it—as evidenced by the need felt by other clerics to condemn it—it seems to have been met with censure from some prominent voices, at least of those willing to commit their opinion on this issue to writing.

With the possible exception of Poeta Saxo's "vulgaria carmina" (and perhaps the songs Louis the Pious learnt), the material presented above refers to a Germanic vernacular. By the ninth century, however, there was a considerable divergence between the Romance vernaculars and Latin; there is some evidence that there were oral historical traditions in the Romance languages as well. We have no actual historical narratives in any Romance language from this period, and the possibility that the later *Chansons de geste* derive from oral material of the ninth and tenth centuries is fraught with difficulty.⁴³ Nevertheless, it seems to be the case that Ermoldus Nigellus (writing in the late 820s) is aware of vernacular narratives concerning Charlemagne's son Louis (the Pious);⁴⁴ Notker's *Gesta Karoli magni* (composed towards the end of the ninth century) is thought to contain an early reflex of the later *Chanson* on Ogier of Denmark;⁴⁵ and although direct textual links cannot be ascertained, the eleventh- and twelfth-century epics of the Guillaume cycle, the *Chanson de Roland*, and a number of other *Chansons de geste* are thought to originate in oral vernacular narratives of the ninth century and tenth centuries.⁴⁶ Furthermore, it is entirely possible that the "vulgaria carmina" about Charlemagne's ancestors referred to by Poeta Saxo were not Germanic, but Romance.⁴⁷ However, the bulk of the reflexes in Latin of oral historical poetry in a Romance vernacular come from the very end of the tenth century or later, suggesting that—as with the Germanic material on kings of the distant past—a certain amount of time elapsed between the historical events and the evolution of a vernacular poetic tradition.

It is important to stress that Latin historiography would not have been sufficient to create a collective memory among what one would presume was a very important class in Carolingian society—the military, possibly including

German literature are Bostock (1976), Haubrichs (1995), and Kartschoke (2000); the first of these in general provides the most sound interpretation.

43 The various arguments regarding the genesis of the *Chansons de geste* are carefully presented in Kloocke (1972), whose conclusions I follow in this paragraph. On the historical background and function of the *Chansons de geste*, see in addition Duggan (1986); Zink (1995): 3–17; 24–32; on the (later) oral background to the extant written texts, see also Boutet (2012).

44 Faral (ed. and trans. 1932): 842–5.

45 Haefele (ed. 1959): 11, 17.

46 Kloocke (1972).

47 Kloocke (1972): 362–3.

senior aristocratic commanders, whose native language would have been a vernacular, whether Germanic or Romance.⁴⁸ We know from Nithard's histories (written in the early 840s) that both vernaculars were deemed appropriate for the swearing of oaths by kings before a military assembly—which suggests also that the vernacular (rather than Latin) was not just appropriate, but also probably necessary in this context.⁴⁹ The later beginnings of writing in the Romance languages suggests that they were still sufficiently close to Latin to make a written form of Romance as yet unnecessary; this is, of course, not the case for the Germanic tongues. Nevertheless, there must have been some means of collective memory beyond the written Latin histories; it is hardly plausible that only those who had access to written Latin material had any kind of historical consciousness.

I should like to stress, however, that there is no record, from this period or any other, of vernacular Romance narratives concerning the Germanic kings of southern Europe who were so popular in the Germanic vernaculars, even though in the lands those kings had ruled Romance languages were now spoken. Stories about Theoderic (who ruled in Italy), or the legend of the Burgundians (who settled in southern France and most likely spoke vulgar Latin/Proto-Romance before the Franks did), which are among the most popular topics of legendary narrative in the Germanic vernaculars, are not extant in any Romance poetry. This suggests that insofar as these narratives represented a past that was culturally significant, this significance was more closely linked to language than to any sense of 'Germanic' identity based on origins, or identification with the figures in these stories as directly ancestral. In the next section, using the example of narratives about Theoderic, I examine the extent to which we are justified in speaking of 'Germanic' oral traditions.

"Fashionable Gothicism"? The Value of the 'Germanic' Past

The Reception of Theoderic the Great in the Early Middle Ages

Writing in the late 830s, Agnellus of Ravenna informs us that a statue of Theoderic that used to stand in Ravenna was taken away by Charlemagne and installed at his palace in Aachen.⁵⁰ We do not know, from this account, why

48 On the Germanic and Romance vernaculars and their use in this period, see Banniard (1992): 485–533; Banniard (1997): 15–38; Everett (2003): 100–61; Hellgardt (1996); Geuenich (1983); Rexroth (1978); Wright (1982); Wright (ed. 1991) 29–43; 101–74.

49 Müller (ed. 1907): III, 5.

50 Deliyannis (ed. 2006): c. 94.

Charlemagne wanted this statue (Agnellus says only that Charlemagne was impressed by the beauty of it), nor what exactly Theoderic meant for him. It is clear from other sources—including a long poem on this very statue by Walahfrid Strabo (died 849)⁵¹—that Theoderic did not have a wholly positive reputation at the Carolingian court at least by the time of Louis the Pious. We have encountered the figure of Theoderic elsewhere as well: in *Deor*, *Widsith*, *Waldere*, and the Old High German *Hildebrandslied*, and of course in the Latin prose histories of Jordanes and Isidore, as well as the Fredegar chronicle. In the later middle ages, Theoderic was to become one of the most popular characters of Germanic heroic literature. But although we now unambiguously identify Theoderic as a Gothic—and therefore 'Germanic'—king, it is far from clear that this is the image he had during the period we are concerned with in the present study. As mentioned above, Fredegar thought Theoderic was (like the Franks) Macedonian, and ultimately of Trojan descent. Furthermore, although Charlemagne's interest appears to attest to a positive reception of Theoderic, there was also a long tradition among ecclesiastical writers of denigrating him because of his Arianism. The figure of Theoderic, therefore, is a useful means of examining the value of the barbarian/'Germanic' vs Roman dichotomy, in particular in the ninth and tenth centuries.⁵²

It is not possible to know what exactly Charlemagne thought about Theoderic, but we can assume that it was something positive; there seems to be no reason why he would have taken the statue from Ravenna and installed it at Aachen if it was of a negative character. There were a large number of

51 Herren (ed. and trans. 1991).

52 The most thorough analysis of the reception of Theoderic in Greek and Latin sources to the early seventh century is presented by Goltz (2008), whom I follow in my presentation of this earlier material. Goltz does not include much discussion of Theoderic in Fredegar; this is studied by Borchert (2005). The sources on the reception of Theoderic from the sixth to the sixteenth century are printed in Lienert, Vollmer-Eicken, and Wolter (eds 2008), with brief commentary and references to the relevant scholarship. For further studies of Theoderic with discussions of the contemporary and later sixth-century sources, see Ausbüttel (2003); Heather (1995); Moorhead (1992). Other historical analyses of note that incorporate some discussion on the meaning of this figure as received in early medieval culture include Löwe (1952): 392–99, Innes (2000): 241–5, and Hammer (2005): 309–18. Literary studies on Theoderic in the Germanic vernaculars are legion; most deal with material from outside our period. Useful guides are provided by Heinze (1999), Lienert (2010), and Wisniewski (1986); see further Marold (1985) for an overview of the negative portrayal of this figure in the later material; and most recently, Kragl (2007), which also addresses the early historical sources, and provides extensive references to earlier literary scholarship. In addition see Haubrichs (2000), and Marold (1988), both of which focus in particular on the earlier material.

Latin written sources on Theoderic that would have been available in Carolingian court circles, but it is striking that these are overwhelmingly hostile. As early as the so-called *Excerpta Valesiana*, a narrative of Theoderic's life and deeds probably compiled soon after his death, we receive negative reports about his reign.⁵³ This text may not have been transmitted outside Italy in the Carolingian period, but a number of other sources from the sixth or early seventh century that were certainly quite widely known later provide an inimical portrayal of Theoderic: the *Liber pontificalis*,⁵⁴ Gregory the Great,⁵⁵ and Gregory of Tours.⁵⁶ These texts are followed or cited many years later by, among others, Bede in his chronicle and martyrology, Paul the Deacon in his *Romana*, and the martyrologies of Hrabanus Maurus and Notker I of St Gall.⁵⁷ These are all fairly prominent sources, well known in the ninth century and later; in all cases, Theoderic is clearly described as a heretic who persecuted a pope, and certainly does not come across as a figure worthy of emulation.⁵⁸

-
- 53 König (ed. and trans. 1997): xv–xvi; for a brief introduction to this text, see Croke (2003): 352–8; a thorough discussion is in Goltz (2008): 476–541.
- 54 After Theoderic has had Boethius and Symmachus killed, when Pope John and his entourage return from Byzantium, “rex Theodoricus hereticus cum grande dolo et odio suscepit eos [*scil.* Pope John and his entourage]” (“the heretic king Theoderic received them with great treachery and hatred”) and although “gladio voluit interfecire” (“he wanted to kill them by the sword”), “metuens indignatione Iustini Augusti [...] tamen in custodia omnes adflictos cremavit” (“fearing the wrath of the emperor Justin, he did not do so, destroying them in prison by maltreatment instead”; Duchesne, ed. and trans. 1886–92: LV,6); for commentary on this passage, see Goltz (2008): 400–25; see his n. 241 on the meaning of ‘cremare’; I have followed the translation in Davis (trans. 2000).
- 55 “Quia Iohannem papam adfligendo in custodia occidit, Symmachum quoque patricium ferro trucidavit, ab illis iuste in igne mitti apparuit, quos in hac uita iniuste iudicavit” (de Vogüé, ed. 1978–80: IV,31: “since he killed Pope John by casting him into prison and slaughtered the patrician Symmachus with the sword, he seems rightly consigned to flames by those whom he unjustly judged in this life”); see further Goltz (2008): 590–5.
- 56 Theoderic persecutes the Catholics in Italy, and when Pope John beseeches him not to, the latter is imprisoned: “Positus vero sanctus Dei in carcerem, tantis adtritrus est iniuriis, ut non post multum tempus spiritum exaleret” (“Consigned to prison, God’s saint was so worn down by injuries that not long afterwards he gave up the ghost”); Theoderic is shortly afterwards punished by God and we are told that “suscepitque protinus perpetuum gehennae flammantis incendium” (“he suffered the perpetual fire of flaming hell”; Krusch, ed. 1885: c. 39); see further Goltz (2008): 588–90.
- 57 Mommsen (ed. 1898): 501; 511 (Bede’s chronicle); PL 94: cols 928–9 (Bede’s martyrology); Droysen (ed. 1879): XVI,8–11 (Paul’s *Romana*); PL 110: col. 1147c (Hrabanus); PL 131: col. 1090 (Notker).
- 58 For detailed studies of the early negative portrayals of Theoderic and (more briefly) on their later reception, see Goltz (2008): 377–432; 501–21; 587–98.

Nevertheless, there was also a positive tradition about Theoderic. Apart from the works produced by his courtiers Ennodius and Cassiodorus, earlier portions of the *Liber pontificalis* presented him in a neutral manner, and the first part of the *Excerpta Valesiana* presents Theoderic as an ideal king.⁵⁹ In the mid-sixth century, the *Vita Fulgentii* and the *Vita Caesarii* mention Theoderic only in passing, but present him as a beloved and wise ruler.⁶⁰ Longer narratives with a largely positive portrayal are in Fredegar and Jordanes. According to Fredegar, the Goths remained in Italy after the sack of Rome in 410, but, being harassed by Odoacer, they asked the emperor to appoint Theoderic—said to be of Macedonian origin—as patrician.⁶¹ The Macedonian origin is important: as we have seen, Fredegar thought Macedonians were, like Franks and Romans, descendants of Trojans, so Theoderic is here of a people cognate with the Franks, and distinct from other non-Roman peoples, including the Goths over whom he rules. Fredegar presents a number of colourful stories about Theoderic that are not known from elsewhere;⁶² it is worth noting that it is Fredegar—writing in Latin, and presenting Theoderic as Macedonian—who is the earliest source to tell us that Theoderic had to flee from Odoacer (albeit very briefly). A flight from Odoacer also occurs in the *Hildebrandslied* and in other much later vernacular narratives, in which, however, he is in exile for thirty years, and flees not to Ravenna (as in Fredegar), but out of Italy. We are also told that Theoderic defeated, in single combat, the Avar king Xerxes, who, when freed by Theoderic, recognises the latter's superiority and decides to submit to him.⁶³ However, after having presented an overwhelmingly favourable narrative, Fredegar does tell us that Theoderic was killed by divine anger for having caused the death of Pope John.⁶⁴ Jordanes also provides a positive account of Theoderic;⁶⁵ uniquely, he makes no mention of the deaths of Pope

59 On the presentation of Theoderic in these texts, see Goltz (2008): 310–29; 342–54 (Ennodius and Cassiodorus); 330–41 (the *Liber pontificalis*); 485–500 (the *Excerpta Valesiana*).

60 PL 65: 117–50; Krusch (ed. 1896); on these texts, see Goltz (2008), 436–46.

61 Fredegar: II,57.

62 Large portions of the narrative are, however, based on literary models: Borchert (2005) names Jonas's *Vita Columbani* and Orosius as some of the sources, as well as other known narratives about Theoderic.

63 Fredegar: II,57. In reality, Theoderic fought neither Huns nor Avars. As we have seen, Huns and Avars were confused in later times, for example in *Waltharius*, and in later reflexes of the Theoderic legend in Germany, he is often associated with the Hunnish court of Etzel (Attila).

64 Fredegar: II,59.

65 *Getica*: 269–304; on Jordanes's portrayal of Theoderic, see Goltz (2008): 267–99.

John, Symmachus, and Boethius. Nevertheless, although Theoderic's heresy and killing of a pope are excluded from the *Getica*, Jordanes's narrative of Theoderic "turns out to fall far short of glorification",⁶⁶ and thus seems unlikely to have inspired Charlemagne to want a Theoderic-statue at his palace.⁶⁷ If Charlemagne saw Theoderic as a positive figure—as he must have done to want his statue in Aachen—his source for this image must lie elsewhere than Jordanes.

We noted above that the many texts presenting a solely or primarily negative image of Theoderic were well-known in the ninth century; and the negative view is presented by prominent authors such as Gregory the Great and Bede. That Walahfrid Strabo shared such a view is therefore not necessarily surprising. Walahfrid's objections to Theoderic are, however, not just his heresy, but also his threat to legitimate power: he is viewed as an usurper. Importantly, Walahfrid's poem is not solely a polemic against Theoderic, but against those Franks who see him as a positive exemplum.⁶⁸ Such people therefore must have existed, and as they surely could not have seen Theoderic as a positive figure because of any religious virtues, the reason for their admiration could only have been his secular achievements. Whether these consist of his rule of Italy, his supposed battle against the Avars, or the fact that he was an eminent king from a people (Macedonians) cognate with the Franks, or some combination of these, remains unclear.

The opposing attitudes to Theoderic attest to conflicting views deriving from primarily secular or clerical viewpoints.⁶⁹ We have no need to assume that any of the discussion regarding whether Theoderic should be seen in a positive or negative light must have taken place outside the realm of written, Latin discourse; but given that people talk, and that vernacular sources are known to have existed, there is also no need to assume any necessary dichotomy between oral/vernacular and written/Latin traditions regarding Theoderic.⁷⁰ The poles here are of stringently clerical vs lay attitudes to a past ruler, who might perhaps have been viewed as barbarian, or at least anti-Roman in the sense of usurping imperial authority, and might have been seen

66 Goffart (1988): 66.

67 Hammer (2005): 314–15.

68 Herren (1992): 40.

69 Note that Freculph of Lisieux, a contemporary of Walahfrid's, conjoins in one text somewhat diverging views of Theoderic apparently derived from a combination of Jordanes and Gregory the Great: Allen (ed. 2002): II.v,18. On this passage, see also Coumert (2007): 369.

70 Innes (2000): 244.

as a 'Germanic' ruler, but who might equally well have been understood as a king of Macedonian and thus Trojan descent, who fulfilled an important office, but under the authority of the Roman emperor.

Even in the vernacular poems, the attitudes to Theoderic—"a bad-luck Goth if ever there was one"⁷¹—are not easy to decipher. In the *Hildebrandslied* we are told that he fled Odoacer and was in exile for thirty years, and the return of Hildebrand—Theoderic's follower—seems to imply the return also of Theoderic. In *Deor* we again get a reference to thirty years, the period for which Theoderic ruled "Mæringa burg".⁷² In the garbled narrative of *Waldere*, we learn that Widia, Weland's son, frees Theoderic from monsters (the text gives no explanation as to who these monsters are, or how Theoderic was trapped).⁷³ And the Theoderic of *Widsith* is just a name, and almost certainly unrelated to Theoderic the Ostrogoth.⁷⁴ All that we can say, from these fragmentary references, is that there is no explicit record in the vernacular poems of a negative image of Theoderic, though he is, once more, hardly presented as a figure really worthy of emulation. We do not hear of him ruling Rome, conquering peoples, or doing anything particularly grand: he is forced into exile, rules an unidentified "burg", and when trapped by monsters (as in *Waldere*) cannot free himself without help.

We can conclude that Theoderic was obviously a figure known both in clerical and in secular elite circles; that there was a long (and very authoritative) tradition condemning him; and that there were also texts, from Jordanes to the vernacular material, that apparently elided the negative aspects of his rule, but did not, nevertheless, portray him as a particularly glorious figure. Charlemagne, however, saw fit to install a statue of Theoderic at Aachen. Given the way Theoderic is portrayed by such a towering figure as Gregory the Great, there must have been a strong secular tradition, possibly deriving from Fredegar or a written source of his, and possibly, but not necessarily, available to Charlemagne in oral vernacular form, that acted as a counterweight and presented Theoderic positively.⁷⁵ There is little point in further speculation regarding putative

71 Frank (1991): 90.

72 *Deor*: 18–20.

73 *Waldere II*: 4–10.

74 *Widsith*: 20 (here he is said to rule the Franks); 115.

75 Unlike Innes (2000): 243–4, I find it hard to see Jordanes's narrative as being sufficiently positive or authoritative to outweigh the condemnation from the more prominent clerical sources. Hammer (2005): 314–15, believes Charlemagne, a conqueror of Avars, wished to associate himself with Theoderic as an earlier conqueror of Avars, and his inspiration is thus drawn from Fredegar, not Jordanes; this still does not satisfactorily deal with Fredegar's mention of Theoderic's killing of a pope. Löwe argues that Theoderic was

stories about Theoderic; but we can certainly conclude that there was something of a debate regarding how to interpret such a figure, and that he must have had a significant import among a secular elite who were willing to discount his crimes against the Church.⁷⁶ It is possible that the reason why only fragmentary vernacular narratives survive is precisely the clerical disapproval of Theoderic, which would have prevented any really positive narrative—of the sort that might inspire Charlemagne to install his statue at Aachen—from reaching parchment.⁷⁷

What I would like to stress here, however, is that there is no necessary dichotomy between a specifically ‘Germanic’/barbarian/non-Christian view of Theoderic (positive) and a specifically Latin/Christian image of him (negative). The divide is, rather, between strictly religious and lay, not between ‘Germanic’ and non-‘Germanic’, perspectives; between those who see him primarily as a negative figure for religious reasons (heresy; killing a pope), and those for whom he is a more positive figure because of his military achievements (various conquests; ruling Rome), and possibly also because he was felt to be in some way an ancestral figure. In the last case, being thought of as an ancestral figure need have had no relation to any perceived sense of ‘Germanic’ kinship: he could have been perceived thus by Franks because they, like him, were thought to be of Trojan, not ‘Germanic’ origin. Theoderic would have been, in this reading, viewed not as a great ‘Germanic’ ruler of the past, but rather a great Macedonian/Trojan (but non-Roman) ruler of the past, akin to the Trojan-derived Franks of the present. We need to reckon with the possibility

known as the first ‘Germanic’ ruler of Rome, and Charlemagne wished to associate himself with Theoderic for this reason after becoming Roman emperor, and also to indicate to the Byzantines that he laid no claims on the east (Löwe 1952: 394–8). This reading ignores Odoacer, and assumes too much in the way of a sense of ‘Germanic’ kinship; but it is certainly possible that there was some current political significance to Charlemagne’s act, potentially connected to relations with Byzantium.

76 Godden (2002), examining translations into Old English of Orosius, Boethius, and Bede, shows that in Alfredian England too, there were contrasting opinions of the Goths and of Theoderic. See further, on the function of Goths in England with reference to *Widsith*, the stimulating remarks of Niles (2007)—though he exaggerates, in my view, the importance of Goths for contemporary reflections on ethnicity and identity.

77 Schürr has recently argued that legendary material regarding Theoderic was, in the ninth century, not yet “literaturfähig” precisely because Theoderic was an Arian; this is why he is not the principal protagonist of the *Hildebrandslied* (Schürr 2013: 80–1). Clerical disdain is also, more generally, the reason why so little vernacular secular narrative survives from this period, in comparison to the amount of religious material: there were “severe ideological pressures on the channels of transmission” (Wormald 1978: 48).

that one of the more popular figures of Germanic legend in the middle ages was in fact, in the earlier middle ages, not thought of as particularly 'Germanic'.

Nevertheless, the fact that Theoderic was a Goth is not wholly without significance: in the ninth century and after, there was a growing awareness that the various Germanic-speaking peoples were linguistically related. We cannot, therefore, discount the possibility that legends about Theoderic were now especially valued because he was seen as being an ancient Germanic-speaking king. This might also be an explanation for the apparent popularity of another Gothic ruler, Ermanaric: he occurs in *Deor*, *Widsith* and *Beowulf*, and in Fulco's letter cited above; and unlike Theoderic, his appeal cannot lie in his having been a non-Roman ruler of Rome, or a Macedonian.⁷⁸ That being said, we must ultimately concede that we have no firm evidence to judge why Theoderic might have been seen positively, and the extent to which his Gothic-ness might have been an important component in such a view of him; the fact that another Goth, Ermanaric, also had quite a reception in the ninth century and later does not make it legitimate to view Theoderic in the same light as Ermanaric. There are, after all, no records of Ermanaric ruling Rome, or being a Macedonian of Trojan origin, as there are regarding Theoderic. Nevertheless, the issue of a perception of some sort of relationship between the Germanic-speaking peoples in the ninth century is of some relevance with regard to our understanding of contemporary conceptions of the distant past.

The Germanic Languages and the Scandinavian Past

Jordanes was the first historian to bestow origins in Scandinavia on any Germanic-speaking people. In this, he appears to have been followed by the Lombards, beginning with the *OGL*. The first Frankish histories to mention Frankish origins locate them in Troy, not Scandinavia, even though the possibility of a Scandinavian origin of a non-Roman Germanic-speaking people was clearly known. But things changed for the Franks in the ninth century. Ermoldus Nigellus, writing between 826 and 828, closes his description of the Danes by saying that they are reputed to have given birth to the Franks: "Unde

78 The fullest treatment of legends of Ermanaric in the Germanic languages remains that of Brady (1943); her conclusions regarding origin and transmission are, however, outdated. We should note that while Theoderic does not seem to be a figure either of particularly positive or negative qualities, Ermanaric seems to have aroused stronger opinions: in *Deor*, he certainly seems to be a negative figure, and Fulco too sees him as a clearly negative exemplum, but in *Widsith*, he is praised for his generosity, and the characterisation of him as fierce and wrathful to traitors cannot really be said to be negative.

genus Francis adfore fama refert”.⁷⁹ While Fredegar and the *LHF* only knew of a Trojan origin of the Franks, a century after the *LHF* was composed, Freculph, bishop of Lisieux (writing c.830), provides the Franks with *two* sources of origin in his chronicle. He tells us first of their Trojan past: Frigas was Aeneas’s brother, according to some (“ut quidam uolunt”), and ruled in Frigia, and from Frigia came the Franks. Freculph then gives us an alternative version:

Alii uero affirmant eos [*scil.* Francos] de Scanza insula, quae uaginae [*sic.*] gentium est, exordium habuisse, de qua Gotthi et ceterae nationes Theotiscaae exierunt, quod et idioma linguae eorum testatur. Est enim in eadem insula regio, quae, ut ferunt, adhuc Francia nuncupatur. Domino autem annuente de his in sequenti opere plenius enarrare cupimus.⁸⁰

The next work referred to was either never written or has not survived, and there is no trace of its ever having existed. But it is clear that Freculph drew directly on Jordanes for “Scanza” and the “uagina gentium”;⁸¹ what is new, however, is the identification of “Theotiscaae nationes” by means of a common language, a factor we shall consider further below.⁸²

Two other texts written within Carolingian Francia around 800, but dealing with the Burgundians, also attest to what appears to be a new interest in the Scandinavian past. The universal chronicle up to the year 741 tells us that “Burgundiones tempore Tyberi augusti egressi sunt de insola maris cuius vocabulo est Scatanavia”.⁸³ An almost identical account of Burgundian origins is given by the *Passio Sigismundi*, about the Burgundian king Sigismund:

79 Faral (ed. and trans. 1932): 1899.

80 “Others state, however, that they [the Franks] had their origin in the island Scanza, which is the womb of peoples from which the Goths and other Teutonic nations came, which is also attested to by the idiom of their language. There is moreover in that same island a region which, it is said, is still called Francia. With the Lord’s favour, I desire to tell of this more fully in my next work” (Allen, ed. 2002: I.ii,26).

81 Freculph includes in his history a good deal of Jordanes’s Gothic migration myth (I.ii,25), and clearly knew both the *Getica* and the *Romana* quite well; he mentions Jordanes explicitly at II.v,18. On his knowledge of Jordanes, cf. Allen (ed. 2002): 213*, and 311*–15* (a list of passages from Jordanes cited by Freculph).

82 In contrast to Freculph, Otfrid von Weißenburg, writing a generation later, and in the vernacular, still holds to the view that the Franks and Macedonians share the same origins, and provides no alternative theory of Scandinavian origins (Kleiber and Hellgardt, eds. 2004: I.i,87–92).

83 “The Burgundians, in the time of the emperor Tiberius, departed from the island in the sea of which the name is Scatanavia” (Waitz, ed. 1881: 4).

"Tempore Tyberii senioris augusti [...] egressa est gens de insula, quam mare Oceanum cingit, cuius vocabulum est Scandania, qui ex vocabulo quoque regionis Scanadavii nuncupati sunt".⁸⁴ No earlier testimony of a Scandinavian origin of the Burgundians exists.

It is not clear why there should be such an interest in distant Gothic kings or a Scandinavian past, but it could have to do with a new awareness that the Germanic vernaculars were related tongues. Freculph is the only source that unambiguously assigns one language to all peoples who came from Scandinavia, and he and Paul the Deacon seem to be the only sources that know of a common Germanic language shared by several specifically named peoples.⁸⁵ There are, however, other Carolingian sources that link the Goths and the Franks on the grounds of language, while stopping short of stating that the same language was common to all the peoples we now identify as speakers of Germanic tongues. We have already seen that according to Einhard, the barbarian peoples living in "Germania" were very similar with regard to their language(s).⁸⁶ Walahfrid Strabo, in his *Libellus de exordiis et incrementis*, refers to his own tongue as a "Theotisca barbaries"; he knows that "barbari" fought in the Roman military, and that the Franks learnt many Greek words from them, especially from the Goths, who had a "Theotiscus sermo".⁸⁷ Smaragdus of St Mihiel (died c.840), in his discourse on naming patterns, finds that Gothic and Frankish names are similar, and appears to suggest that both Goths and Franks spoke a "Teodisca lingua".⁸⁸ Neither author explicitly suggests any kinship beyond that of the languages of Franks and Goths, though it is certainly possible that they were aware that a "Teodisca lingua" is shared by other peoples too; other uses of this term appear to indicate solely a Germanic vernacular, distinct from Latin or a Romance vernacular, but do not connote any sense of a linguistic kinship between different Germanic-speaking peoples.⁸⁹ Similarly, In Anglo-Saxon

84 "At the time of the emperor Tiberius [...] the people departed from the island which the great ocean surrounds, the name of which is Scandania; they were called Scanadavii from the name of the place" (Wattenbach, ed. 1888: c. 1).

85 Cf. *HL* I,27.

86 Holder-Egger (ed. 1911): c. 15; see also n. 31 above.

87 Harting-Corrêa (ed. and trans. 1996): c. 7.

88 Löfstedt, Holtz, and Kibre (eds 1986): 22–4.

89 In this context, we should also recall Isidore's theory (cited above, chapter two, n. 212) that peoples derived from languages rather than the other way round: *Etym.*: IX.I,14. Given the popularity of the *Etymologiae*, it is likely that the authors mentioned here would have been familiar with this idea; while this need not mean that for them, an awareness of the relatedness of languages also signified a relatedness of peoples, this is certainly a possibility. For detailed discussion of the references to a 'lingua Theodisca' and its political

England, the occasional use of the term simply seems to indicate the Germanic vernacular spoken there, and there is no explicit reference that connects the ‘theodisca lingua’ with the languages of continental Germanic-speaking peoples; the term thus appears to bear no inference of a cultural or other form of identity shared with other peoples.⁹⁰

Two other, earlier sources from Anglo-Saxon England have recently been adduced as evidence of a sense of ‘Germanic’ kinship: Aldhelm of Malmesbury’s *De pedum regulis* (composed in the late seventh century or the first decade of the eighth), and Bede’s *HE*.⁹¹ Aldhelm states that “neminem nostrae stirpis gentium et Germanicae gentis cunabulis confotum in huiuscemodi negotio ante nostram mediocritatem tantopere desudasse”.⁹² Bede, apart from stating that the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes were “de tribus Germaniae populis fortioribus”,⁹³ also names a number of other peoples still in ‘Germania’ whom Egbert goes to convert:

“Ecgberct [...] proposuit animo pluribus prodesse, idest, inito opere apostolico, uerbum Dei aliquibus earum, quae nondum audierant, gentibus euangelizando committere. Quarum in Germania plurimas nouerat esse nationes, a quibus Angli uel Saxones, qui nunc Britanniam incolunt, genus et originem duxisse noscuntur [...] Sunt autem Fresones Rugini Danai Hunni Antiqui Saxones Boructari”.⁹⁴

significance in the Carolingian period, cf. Coumert (2007): 373–8; Geuenich (1983); Geuenich (2000); Geuenich (2004); Rexroth (1978). It is used generally to differentiate between Germanic and Romance segments of the Carolingian empire, but not to draw the former into any kind of affinity with other Germanic speakers, not even two groups with whom they certainly had plenty of contact: the Anglo-Saxons and Danes.

90 On the use of the term ‘theodisc’ in Anglo-Saxon in the eighth century, see Levison (1946): 126–30. On a sense of common identity with other Germanic-speaking peoples, cf. Neidorf (2013a); his arguments are not specifically with regard to this term, and will be discussed in greater detail below. Note that both Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia suffered a good deal of violent conflict with Germanic-speaking peoples from Scandinavia in this period; this might have been one reason why both Scandinavia and an awareness of the relatedness of languages were in the minds of contemporary writers, but it could equally well have been a reason why these writers would not have wished to stress any other sorts of kinship.

91 Neidorf (2013a): 174; 178.

92 “No one of our lineage among the peoples, and nurtured in the cradle of the Germanic people, has ever laboured in such a manner in such work before our mediocrity” (Ehwald, ed. 1919: 202.5–6).

93 “Of the three most powerful peoples of Germany” (*HE*: I.xv,2).

94 “Egbert set forth to be of benefit to the souls of many, that is to say, having begun the apostolic task, to propound the word of God to the other peoples among those who had

Quite apart from the obvious possibility of a purely literary heritage, Aldhelm's words need not signify anything more than an awareness of linguistic kinship; given that there is nothing else he says to denote a perception of common identity, his words need not be interpreted as a sign of any such identity. Bede's statements regarding origins, once again, need not mean anything in terms of perceptions of shared identity: they are an acknowledgement that his people came from the continent and are thus related to peoples there, but whether this bespeaks any sense of a common cultural or ethnic identity is unclear (there is no question of political identity being implied, nor, obviously, religious identity).

In any case, just as *Widsith* gives us an ancient and glorious past that includes Alexander and Caesar, for Bede, 'Germania' seems to include Huns. The Huns were, in all extant evidence of 'Germanic' legends—as well as the contemporary historical sources—generally enemies of Germanic-speaking peoples. What sort of 'Germanic' identity can Bede be propagating if it includes Huns? If it is true—and this is probably a reasonable assumption, though impossible to prove—that "an Anglo-Saxon during the age of Bede was [...] likely to have heard of Eormenric",⁹⁵ he would also most likely have heard of the battles between Goths and Huns. Their inclusion in the list of peoples of 'Germania' suggests that something rather less than a sense of common identity was implied. After all, Freculph and Ermoldus, who suggested Frankish origins in Scandinavia, also knew of Frankish conflict against Scandinavians, and it is highly unclear what sort of common identity similar origins would have implied in such a case. It is likely that in the case of Bede too, 'identity' is probably the wrong term to use with regard to this passage.

There is no denying that there was an awareness of some kind of linguistic kinship between the Germanic peoples; any sort of contact, however, could have made this quite obvious simply because of the similarities between languages, and this need not imply any sense of common identity. A more difficult issue is the belief in common origins; but even this need not mean a sense of a common identity. Ultimately, after all, all of humanity was believed to share a common origin; and as we have seen, the belief in a common origin of Franks and Romans in Troy certainly did not serve to create or support a belief in their common identity, but was, rather, used in narratives that stressed that these

not yet heard it. He knew that there were many of these nations in Germania, from whom the Angles and the Saxons, who now inhabit Britain, are known to have derived their race and origin [...] These are namely the Frisians, the Rugini, the Danai, the Huns, the Old Saxons, and the Boructari" (*HE*: V.ix,1).

95 Neidorf (2013a): 173.

were quite distinct peoples. Concepts of linguistic kinship and common origins, some sort of shared cultural inheritance, and more specific notions of cultural and political identities tied to specific peoples therefore need to be understood as potentially quite discrete from each other; and thus the value of the 'Germanic' past needs to be approached in a more nuanced fashion.

The Value of the 'Germanic' Past

From around 800 onwards, it is clear that oral, vernacular, historical material was extant, occasionally written, and known not just to the secular aristocracy, but also to clerics. There was clearly an interest in rulers of the distant past whom we may identify as Germanic in terms of their language; this interest was shown in regions different from where those rulers had reigned. There was also a discovery of a Scandinavian past; it is probably not a coincidence that the Gothic, Burgundian, and Lombard kings who appear to have been the subjects of oral narratives in the Germanic vernaculars—and not, therefore, of oral narratives transmitted within the areas these kings had once ruled—were kings of peoples who, by this time, were thought to have had a Scandinavian past. Furthermore, in the ninth century, we encounter what appears to be a new awareness that the Germanic languages—and the peoples who spoke them—were related. All of this seems to support the view that "Gothicism [...] suddenly became fashionable around 800".⁹⁶

If the fact that Gothicism was fashionable seems to be quite well attested, what is less clear is why this was so, and what this fashion might have meant. It was undoubtedly nourished by an awareness in learned circles of Jordanes's history of the Goths—but also, I suggest, by the existence of vernacular oral material concerning Gothic kings such as Theoderic and Ermanaric. There is nothing in Jordanes to make a Scandinavian past intrinsically more attractive to Franks (or eighth-century Burgundians) than a Trojan past (or even as attractive as the Trojan past). However, popular narratives about Gothic kings coupled with an awareness of linguistic kinship (stimulated not least by increasing—largely hostile—contact with living Scandinavians) and Jordanes's narration of Scandinavian origins (most likely, however, by this point also transmitted in some sort of oral form as well) could have been an incentive to discover a Scandinavian past where earlier there had been none; and of course, there might by now also have been an attraction in the sheer difference of the Scandinavian origin from the Roman model.

I do not see, however, how a knowledge of Jordanes and an awareness of linguistic kinship could have fuelled the production of vernacular poetry about

96 Frank (1991): 93.

Gothic kings in Francia or Anglo-Saxon England, as Roberta Frank and Walter Goffart have proposed.⁹⁷ Cases of demonstrable vernacular borrowing from written, Latin material are exclusively confined, until the end of the ninth century at least, to religious or philosophical literature, and arise largely from conscious clerical efforts to disseminate the message of Christianity. It is impossible to establish direct textual relationships between any extant Germanic legend and any extant contemporary Latin text; this is not the case for the many vernacular religious works of this period. Given that no such direct textual links can be demonstrated, and therefore the same sort of literary dependence as is evident for the religious material cannot be proven, and given the plentiful evidence for the existence of oral vernacular legendary material (even though little is known of its content), it seems most likely that there was an oral route of transmission for the narrative matter contained in the extant texts—though of course it is most probable that this material would have undergone many modifications both over the course of oral transmission and in the transfer from the oral to the written medium.

I would argue, therefore, that the existence of oral vernacular narratives stimulated an interest in a 'Germanic' past among writers of Latin, rather than, as Frank and Goffart suggest, knowledge of Jordanes causing vernacular poets to compose the extant works.⁹⁸ Nor need it be surprising that there were oral vernacular historical poems; literacy was far from universal, and there is no reason to suppose that only the Latin-educated and literate had any kind of historical consciousness. Early medieval Europe would also not be the only location in which oral and written traditions interacted.⁹⁹

However, I would argue that the stories about a 'Germanic' past were cultivated by Germanic-speaking Franks and Anglo-Saxons not primarily because of a belief in any shared past, nor because of a perception of common identity attached to or deriving from this shared past: the past of the legends was shared by the Romance speakers more than by the Germanic speakers. Rather, these narratives remained in circulation because closely related languages and common forms of poetry (for example, similar alliterative metres) facilitated

97 Frank (1991); Goffart (2002).

98 See Frank (1991), and Goffart (2002). I have set forth in detail elsewhere my arguments regarding the survival of Germanic legends in this period, using the example of the Burgundian legend (Ghosh 2007).

99 On oral historical traditions in the twentieth century, see Vansina (1985), the standard handbook; see also Reichl (2000) for a thoughtful comparative study of Turkic oral traditions extant within a literate culture, with medieval Germanic oral-derived poetry.

preservation, adaptation, and transmission.¹⁰⁰ Although possible antecedents might have been composed by Germanic-speaking peoples closer to the subjects of the narratives, the stories died out among those peoples when their language changed from Germanic to Romance: hence the survival only among distant and unrelated peoples. This explains also the fact that Romance languages preserve for us no legends from before the shift from Germanic to Romance that are also extant in a Germanic language.

In their new environment, narratives about Gothic kings would have been received and passed on not as a form of maintaining 'our past', but simply as a part of inherited tradition, 'folklore', with a purpose quite different from that of historical poetry about recent events,¹⁰¹ but also differing in function from origin narratives or 'national' histories. These stories were not origin narratives, or songs about the "avi et proavi" of the reigning king, and thus had little immediate political significance: they were just narratives about "veterum regum actus et bella" that served as bearers of moral values of importance to a secular, military aristocracy (martial valour, honour, military heroism), but had nothing to do with self-identification as a people or nation or polity of any sort—unlike, for example, origin narratives.¹⁰² The characters could have somewhat different values in different stories; they were not important so much for their historical deeds as for the heroic qualities attributed to them in the legends. By the ninth century, although a tradition of historical poetry dealing with the relatively recent past remained current, there existed also a tradition of such

100 The fundamental work on Germanic metre remains Sievers (1893); for more accessible and concise introductions, see Bostock (1976): 304–22; and von See (1967). A more wide-ranging comparative study of vocabulary, formulaic phrases, and thematic elements across the older Germanic languages is presented by Meyer (1889).

101 Innes (2000): 247–8; Mostert (2006): 121.

102 Fundamental for these points: Wormald (1978): 57–8; 65–7; see further Innes (2000); Mostert (2006); Reichl (2000): 177–9. The fact that martial honour was an important value for the aristocracy, but could be seen in a negative light from the clerical perspective should not be surprising, and derives from the basic fact of secular life: rulers and the elites were in this period a military class. On the militarisation of the early medieval aristocracy, see Wickham (2005): 174–8; 210–11; 257–8; Wickham (2009): 187–91; and specifically on France/Gaul, see Sarti (2013). Note also, however, that while churchmen might have objected to many aspects of secular values, they were no less implicated within the world, values, and behaviour of the laity, being themselves normally from leading aristocratic families, and often taking part in secular activities too; the very fact that Alcuin felt a need to object to such pastimes in a monastic context attests to such a link. The literature on these connections is vast; in addition to the works just cited, see the references given at chapter one, n. 82 for a sample.

inherited legendary narratives, the value of which did not lie in their power to help form identity by identification with common ancestors.¹⁰³

It might be objected that treating these texts as a part of a more general cultural inheritance simply brings in 'Germanic' identity by the back door: if it is a cultural heritage common only to peoples speaking Germanic languages, why can we not simply omit the scare quotes from the term Germanic altogether, and revert to a notion of a common 'Germanic' cultural identity as the reason why Germanic-speaking peoples preserved narratives about (other) Germanic-speaking peoples? While most historians and even many literary scholars would no longer wish to support such a notion, the idea of a "pan-Germanic identity" has recently been forcefully revived by Leonard Neidorf. Neidorf defines such an identity as "an awareness of shared origins and intertwined histories".¹⁰⁴ But there is actually no evidence that there was an awareness of *both* shared origins and common histories; nor is it clear why an awareness of shared origins should bespeak a sense of a common identity. Goths appear in Anglo-Saxon poetry, to be sure; but even in that poetry, there is no connection between the histories of the Goths and the Anglo-Saxons. While the evidence surveyed above certainly points to a belief in some sort of common origins, as well as an awareness of linguistic kinship, it does not demonstrate any perception of shared historical trajectories beyond a very distant origin, shared with many peoples, some of whom were, in the present of the authors of the extant texts, manifestly very distinct, and even in some cases clearly inimical entities.

It is ironic that the text used to support Neidorf's argument, *Widsith*, is precisely one of the works that demonstrates how problematic the theory of pan-Germanic identity is: while it is true, as Neidorf argues, that *Widsith* alludes to a wide range of 'Germanic' heroes of the past, it is difficult to see this as an

103 Paul the Deacon's brief comments on songs about Alboin (*HL*: I,27) might be taken as a model for how this process functioned: such songs might well have been known originally among Lombards as well, and spread to Bavarians and Saxons (both neighbouring peoples), but by Paul's time appear not to have been extant among Lombards—because of the loss of language. In the meanwhile, they might have been further transferred to other peoples—the Angles and Saxons in England, for example—again due to physical and linguistic proximity. But already by the time they were received by the Bavarians and Saxons, they were not, for these audiences, about 'our past', but rather about past heroes, and, in Paul's words, commemorated Alboin's generosity and glory in battle—that is, his embodiment of the secular aristocratic and martial virtues held commonly among various (not just Germanic-speaking) peoples—rather than anything specific to national or ethnic identity.

104 Neidorf (2013a): 174–5, *et passim*.

expression of a pan-Germanic identity because the poem also includes characters and peoples who are quite clearly non-Germanic by any definition. If *Widsith* appeals to some sort of shared cultural heritage among its audience, that heritage included Alexander and Caesar; if it is a pan-Germanic identity that finds expression here, then that identity encompasses personages whom it is hard to see as 'Germanic'. As we have seen, furthermore, even another poem traditionally seen as an expression of the 'Germanic' tradition and heroic ethos, the *Hildebrandslied*, has as one of its leading characters a figure who might have been perceived as Macedonian or Trojan, like at least one segment of the likely audience for the poem, a Frankish population that might have thought of its own origins as lying in Troy. It is difficult, in these cases, to see what is gained by the use of the term 'Germanic' in anything more than a linguistic sense. Similarly, as we have seen, Bede—also adduced by Neidorf in support of his argument—includes Huns among his list of 'Germanic' people; once again, and especially considering the extant (later) legendary matter regarding Huns as well *Waltharius*, this seems to be a matter of 'famous people of the past' (in this case with a common origin) rather than necessarily people with whom the author perceived a shared identity.

This sort of hybridity makes it difficult to speak of a pan-Germanic identity, however much we might seek to denature such a phrase from its very problematic connotations in the earlier scholarship. The problem with such a concept is not—*pace* Neidorf—simply a matter of the ideological baggage it carries, inherited from the fraught scholarly traditions of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. It is rather that the textual evidence itself suggests both that boundaries between 'Germanic' and other parts of the cultural inheritance were rather less clear than we might desire, and that shared origins need have little to do with a sense of identity in any meaningful, specific sense. If Ermanaric and Caesar were both equally part of a common inherited sense of cultural identity that was expressed in a vernacular Germanic language, unless we assume that Caesar was also thought to have been a Germanic-speaker, it is not clear what value the concept of a 'Germanic' identity can have as an analytical category. Even if we believe that the audiences of these stories indeed believed Caesar and Ermanaric, or Theoderic and Alexander, or Angles, Saxons, and Huns, were of the same stock, this would only serve to underline the point that *our* categories of 'Germanic' or 'barbarian' vs Roman or Greek are perhaps not best suited to understand how people living in this period approached issues of identity, whether ethnic or cultural.

As we have seen already, there was clearly some awareness of linguistic kinship among the Germanic languages—but does knowledge of linguistic kinship really mean a perception of a common identity? We have seen above that

Einhard refers to the barbarian peoples conquered by Charlemagne as having very similar languages; this seems to be an acknowledgement of linguistic kinship, but from the context it seems apparent that Einhard does not imply any other sort of kinship or shared identity. His narrative of the Saxon wars does not in any manner suggest that Saxons and Franks had shared such an identity before the former were integrated into the empire of the latter—though it is obvious that for Einhard as well, the Saxons were among the people who lived east of the Rhine and were similar in language to the other peoples inhabiting “Germania”.¹⁰⁵

There is also absolutely no evidence to suggest that a belief in a common origin of Franks and other Germanic-speaking peoples in Scandinavia implies any particular sense of common identity to authors who reiterate this trope: neither Anglo-Saxon nor Carolingian writers in general appear to have felt they shared an identity with the various Scandinavian invaders they encountered in the ninth century. Furthermore, it was a commonplace that *all* peoples were ultimately descended from Adam: this fact, if nothing else, should make us pause before we place too much meaning with—regard to perceptions of shared identity—on phrases suggesting a belief in common origins, since common acknowledgement of a very distant relatedness of origins need have little to do with a more specific sense of current shared identity. The point can be reinforced quite simply by recalling again that in the Frankish origin myth, the Franks are made to share what is ultimately a common origin with the Romans; this quite clearly does *not*, however, give them a sense of common identity with the Romans, and in fact the narratives of Frankish origins, as we saw, manifestly seek to distinguish Franks from Romans.

It is also surely not insignificant that the very peoples who were the subjects of these narratives seem not to have cultivated them, and those who did were quite distant from the subjects of the stories that bore this supposed ‘pan-Germanic’ heritage.¹⁰⁶ As I have argued in greater detail elsewhere, the simplest explanation as to why the descendants of those peoples—Burgundians,

105 Holder-Egger (ed. 1911): cc. 7–9 (description of the Saxon wars); c. 15 (linguistic similarity of peoples in Germania).

106 A useful overview of what narratives are extant from which regions is provided in Haubrichs (2002), who reiterates the point that “nur die nordseeegermanischen *gentes* und die ostgermanischen Völker der Goten und Burgunden Heldensage geschaffen haben, die in größeren Umfange exportfähig war, Heldensage, die von anderen germanischen Stämmen vorwiegend west- und südgermanischer Provenienz akzeptiert werden konnte. Dabei ist die Wirkung der nordischen Stoffe der Schweden, Gauten, Dänen nahezu völlig auf die Britischen Insel begrenzt. Dagegen erreichten die ostgermanischen Stoffe die ganze germanische Welt” (Haubrichs 2002: 85–6).

for example—commemorated in later vernacular Germanic poetry seem to have themselves had so little interest in maintaining a link with what could after all have been more legitimately ‘identitätsstiftend’ for them than for, say, Anglo-Saxons (or thirteenth-century Icelanders for that matter) is the linguistic shift that took place in the regions where these peoples lived.¹⁰⁷ It is no coincidence that the narratives of the ‘Germanic’ heroic past are preserved in northern Europe, where people continued to speak Germanic languages, whereas in the south other heroic narratives, in Romance languages, came into being. These Romance narratives were about later heroes, to be sure: those around whom stories accrued after the linguistic shift.

Stories travelled because of linguistic connections; if they had been important for any sort of ethnic identity then surely, given that a sense of Burgundian identity in some form (for example) clearly remained alive even in the eighth century, Burgundian narratives would have made the transfer across languages—just as, for example, narratives about early Lombard history that had once most likely been in the vernacular were later preserved in Latin. In terms of the secular values embodied by the narratives of supposedly ‘Germanic’ legend (martial heroism, for example), there is every reason to believe that these values were shared equally by non-Germanic speakers, and indeed the later Romance narratives are very similar in this regard. This aspect of the cultural inheritance was, therefore, the same among both Romance and Germanic-speakers; it was borne by different sets of narratives, however, not because the cultural heritage was, in terms of its value for the audience, particularly different among Germanic-speakers, but purely because of the linguistic differences between Romance and Germanic on the one hand, and the similarities between the Germanic languages on the other.

The Anglo-Saxon case might, perhaps paradoxically, serve to demonstrate precisely this point. Because of the peculiarities in the historical background to the establishment of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, it is in England more than in other post-Roman polities that the Germanic vernacular and material contained in it continued to be preserved and passed on. This was not because of any sense of common identity the Anglo-Saxons perceived between themselves and ancient Goths; rather, it is because they retained a language, and therefore also stories that had originally been carried over into that language because of its closeness to the language in which those stories originated. It is for this reason that the so-called ‘Germanic’ culture and identity survived so far away from the peoples and events it seems to have been concerned with, but not among those peoples themselves.

107 Ghosh (2007): 246–52.

There is no extant evidence that knowledge of linguistic kinship signified a sense of shared 'ethnic' or 'pan-Germanic' identity, at least not to the extent that this was stronger than a Christian identity or one derived from a Roman inheritance—or as strong as the 'national', political, or more specific ethnic identity of the sort that, as I have argued, appears to have been reflected in the 'national' histories examined above. What a knowledge of linguistic kinship—sometimes, but not always, coupled with a belief in shared origins—meant is far from clear. It seems to me perfectly plausible to suggest that it signified rather less than what many modern scholars have supposed: not a sense of common identity, but simply what it stated, an awareness that languages were related, which might or might not have to do with a very distant common origin, but which did not, even such an origin notwithstanding, imply a sense of common identity beyond a very general awareness of relatedness that was not, in terms of what is in German called 'Wir-Gefühl', particularly more significant than the knowledge that ultimately, all human beings shared the same origins.

It is worth recalling also that all the sources cited in the present chapter—and no advocates of a common 'Germanic' identity have adduced any further significant material that is different in any important aspect—clearly distinguish between discrete peoples who spoke Germanic languages or inhabited 'Germania' or had their origins in Scandinavia. This is clear evidence of a perception of distinction, which is too easily ignored by those seeking to find a common 'Germanic' identity; we have no evidence whatsoever that the commonalities—language, background in 'Germania', origins in Scandinavia (and note that not all sources adduce all of these)—were more significant than the fact they these were seen to be distinct 'gentes' or 'nationes'.

Unlike the secular legendary matter about Germanic-speaking heroes of the past, which only reached parchment in rare cases, origin narratives, which could have a more direct political relevance, were both written and widely copied—but in Latin, not the vernacular. It seems plausible to suggest that because of the greater religious and political authority of Latin writing, material of sufficient current significance was transferred into this medium, whereas other narratives with less immediate political potential were not. If this theory is correct, it would seem to be the case also that in Anglo-Saxon England, the story of Hengest and Horsa's arrival in Britain was of crucial political importance, but no narratives about the pre-migration past were. The only work that does link, albeit very obliquely, the pre-migration past with the founding myths and therefore the present dynasties of the Anglo-Saxons, is *Beowulf*. It seems to occupy a strange place in Anglo-Saxon historical consciousness, making a link with the pre-migration past, but doing so in order to raise moral and religious

questions, rather than for any kind of immediate political purpose. I believe that it does, however, attest to the fact that some sort of narratives about the pre-migration period were cultivated: the Anglo-Saxons knew more about their distant past than just the names in their genealogies, and the *Beowulf*-poet sees that past as highly problematic, more so than the view of the pagan past presented by any of the 'national' histories or the fragments of legendary narrative from the continent.

By the end of the ninth century, however, it seems fair to state that, for the most part, the distant past had been harmonised with the present by a number of strategies—at least on the continent. For the clerical writers of Latin histories, the potentially dangerous parts of the origin narratives had been 'denatured', as we saw with Paul the Deacon, while for the secular aristocracy, the military aspects were similarly divorced from any religious connotations, and used more as forms of "serious entertainments",¹⁰⁸ bearers of cultural value without any necessary sense of ethnic affiliation being attached to them. We should recall that while this was certainly a period in which there was a growing awareness of the linguistic similarities between the various Germanic languages, an increased interest in Scandinavian pasts, and a growth in the recording of literature in the Germanic vernaculars, both religious and secular, it was equally a period that witnessed a 'renaissance' of Latinity, Latin education and writing, coupled with a resurgence of the rhetoric of Roman-ness, of which the coronation of Charlemagne as emperor at Rome is only one indication.¹⁰⁹ There is no warrant for seeing these two interests as belonging in separate worlds, and thus we should not draw strong distinctions between the 'Germanic' and 'Roman' inheritances and their value in this period. Insofar as there was a conflict, it was not a matter of 'Germanic'/barbarian/oral vs Latin/Roman/written cultures; it was rather a conflict between the more strictly religious members of the Church, and the secular elite culture within which the Church was embedded; even the existence of this conflict—which did not disappear in the following centuries either—does not by any means indicate that there was a vast gulf between clerics and lay persons, and the evidence we have surveyed in this and the foregoing chapters in fact suggests rather the opposite.

108 The phrase is drawn from Partner (1977), who argues for a later period that historical writing was intended to be entertaining, but that this did not detract from a perception of its value as edification.

109 There is a vast body of scholarship on these developments; a good survey is given by the essays in McKitterick (ed. 1994). Specifically on the Latin/Roman aspects, see in particular Brown (1994); Garrison (1994); Garrison (2000); Innes (1997); and Wood (2014).

Conclusions

From the period up to c.1000, there is a small corpus of texts from western Europe that are concerned with narratives of a distant past that can legitimately be called 'barbarian', in that this was a past about peoples who had been thus labelled by Romans, and a past, moreover, that was for the most part not contained in the extant transmitted form within the Latin, Greek, or biblical historical traditions as narratives about these specific peoples, and derived in part either from some sort of barbarian oral sources, or a reworking of the written Roman inheritance in the form of a barbarian distant past. The bulk of the extant texts are also works that might be thought (and have been believed by modern scholars) to contain some sort of 'Germanic' heritage, not least because the peoples who are the subjects of these narratives were, or had been, speakers of Germanic languages. The purpose of the present monograph has been to examine, on the basis of the (admittedly rather limited) extant material, the ways in which this past was used, what function it might be said to have had within the historical consciousness of early medieval elites, and the extent to which there was in fact any particular value given to a distinction between Roman and barbarian heritages, or to a sense of 'Germanic' cultural identity.

We have seen that the sources betray a wide range of approaches to the distant, barbarian past. Nevertheless, the many differences in detail between the texts notwithstanding, it is apparent that there is in general no real binary opposition between the categories of either Roman or Christian on the one hand, and barbarian on the other, with regard to the cultural heritage of the period in which the texts were composed. Although the strategies used by these texts differ, in almost every case—even if by varying means, and with the notable exception of *Beowulf*—they seek to overcome any chasm that we might perceive between these two aspects of the early medieval cultural inheritance.

The studies in the foregoing chapters have revealed one fundamental similarity and one fundamental difference in terms of the place of the barbarian past across the corpus of extant texts that are evidence of a historical consciousness encompassing this past. The similarity is that in all of these texts, the barbarian past is completely imbued with a non-barbarian, Christian- and often Latin-influenced present. This is the case even in a work like *Beowulf*, the most distinctly 'barbarian' of the texts examined above, which is also the text

that most problematises this past—precisely because the Christian heritage is inseparable from the other aspects of the poem. In most of the narratives, as we have seen, there is either a conscious effort to gloss over any perception of a break between the barbarian past and the Christian and Latinate present, or, as in *Widsith*, apparently no perception of a real difference at all.¹

The difference in the treatment of the barbarian past in these texts arises from the fact that some of them—the ‘national’ histories examined in chapters two, three, and four—are concerned with a *specific* past that is connected directly to the present (‘this is where the Goths/Franks/Lombards came from, and this story is about Goths/Franks/Lombards and their kings, who are ancestors or antecedents of our present kings’) and thus might be understood as intending to create, cultivate, or reflect some sort of notion of collective identity or ‘Wir-Gefühl’. In contrast, the legendary material examined in chapters five, six, and seven, relates stories about a less specific past that is not connected to the present in any specific way (‘these are great men of the past who killed dragons/died heroic deaths/performed heroic deeds and are thus in some respect worthy of admiration and emulation by warriors like us’).

In the latter case what was of interest for the audience was, I suggest, more a matter of stories that were well-known (because, for linguistic reasons, they could be, and had been, easily transmitted), and a common cultural knowledge these stories contained that was related to the martial and moral values inherent in them, rather than ‘ethnic’ or ‘national’ identity—which, however, seems to be the issue of importance in the former case of the ‘national’ histories. These values and knowledge were not, however, unique attributes of ‘Germanic’ societies, but were, rather, common to early medieval elites more generally. The ‘Germanic’ cultural inheritance was specific to Germanic-speakers only in terms of, and because of, the similarities of their languages, and therefore their poetic forms.

In the ‘national’ histories, the concern is with a very specific barbarian past—respectively, the Gothic, Frankish, and Lombard pasts—that is presented as the past of the polity (or at least of the ruling class of that polity) that is the subject of the history. All these texts show a concern with establishing a continuity between a distant past that was not Christian and not Roman in any sense, and the present, which was both Christian and in many respects Roman

1 The latter blurring of boundaries is valid equally with regard to the Greco-Roman and ‘Germanic’ heritages, in *Widsith* and elsewhere, as we have seen; and even *Beowulf*, in its extant material context, is bound together with a text about Alexander, suggesting that by c.1000, perhaps no great qualitative difference was perceived between these two great, ancient, and equally pre-Christian monster-slayers.

too. In all cases, the actual discontinuity is minimised in one way or another. With the exception of Isidore's *HG*, all the stories of the distant past draw to a significant extent on material not contained within earlier written historical narratives; even when, as in the case of the Frankish Trojan myth, the ultimate source is a written work, the authors of the extant texts seem most likely to have used some form of oral speculation or storytelling about the distant past. But it is crucial to note that ultimately, while certainly drawing on some sort of oral sources as well, the Trojan and the Scandinavian origin narratives alike are, for the most part, learned constructions based on classical ethnographic models. The oral sources used by the writers of our texts were almost certainly informal reports and/or relatively recent material: there is no evidence for an ancient, authentic, and purely barbarian 'oral tradition'—a 'Traditionskern'—underlying these narratives, and there is certainly no evidence for any sort of barbarian oral tradition free of significant impact from the Roman inheritance.

The *writing* of these histories in *Latin* was a means of formulating an authoritative version of the distant past in the now-authoritative medium and language, but the transfer into a medium and language largely in ecclesiastical hands did not cause an abandonment of a pre-Christian past, which might potentially have been open to ecclesiastical censure. It did mean, however, that that pre-Christian past was dealt with in a way that minimised the possible significance of religious difference. The most important continuities were those that established a clear link between the aristocracy of the present and a past that was in some way perceived to be prestigious; the fact that this distant past, in every case, extended beyond the time of conversion is testament to the importance of secular concerns for the preservation and creation of historical consciousness, no matter how great were the influence of Christian teaching and ecclesiastical historical traditions. But these latter influences are just as important: religious difference was denatured, in a manner of speaking, precisely because a too explicit link with a too dangerously unorthodox past would have been unacceptable. These texts thus represent an effort to harmonise what might have been perceived as conflicting, or at any rate quite different notions of identity and value-systems, as represented by a memory of pagan, barbarian origin and a Christian, Latinate present. In this respect, regardless of how accurate a mirror these texts are of a broader historical consciousness, they are in accordance with the theories of, for example, Jan Assmann and Hans-Werner Goetz, namely that creating a sense of continuity with the past is essential in order to shore up legitimacy in the present.²

2 Assmann (1992): 39–40; 70–2; Goetz (2000).

The function of these narratives was therefore almost certainly more specific than that of texts like *Beowulf* or *Waltharius*. They were not simply written versions of some sort of politically neutral cultural inheritance: they must have had some sort of express political function as well. It is primarily for this reason both that the texts were actually written, and that the potentially problematic aspects of the past were, in a manner of speaking, de-problematized, most prominently in Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum*. It is precisely because these texts—unlike the legendary narratives regarding Theoderic or Hildebrand or Ermanaric, for example—were concerned not with general aristocratic martial values, but could speak to specific concepts of political or ethnic identity, that they were preserved, in writing, and in Latin; and it is also for this reason that efforts were made to ensure that the continuity they represented was not depicted in a way that manifested destabilising breaks between past and present in the manner that we might have expected approaching the issues from our modern perspectives.

In terms of how and whether these texts actually fulfilled a function of creating or supporting some sense of political or national or ethnic identity, however, I must reiterate that we have little evidence on which any serious argument can be based. We cannot really use these texts as the basis for generalisations regarding 'barbarian' or early medieval 'ethnic' identity. We know too little about the extent to which these narratives reflected or influenced perceptions of national identity in the period—although arguably, given that the texts survived, and given that they must have been written with some sort of audience expectation in mind, it is unlikely that what we find in these texts, and a broader elite sense of historical consciousness, were completely in discord with each other. Nevertheless, on the basis of the extant evidence, the most we can claim is that these narratives propagated a particular historical consciousness that was arguably linked to a particular form of group identity of a ruling class within the respective polity, which identity encompassed within itself—if the evidence of these texts can be trusted—*both* a barbarian and a Roman heritage. As Jennifer Neville has suggested, one of the functions of early medieval histories was thus most likely to build up a sense of 'imagined communities' of descent³—though we can never be certain about the extent to which they actually did so, nor how widely the community identity that was being imagined in these texts was felt to be shared.

By the ninth century, all the narratives of origins were available in written form; there is no evidence for origin stories of the Goths, Franks, or Lombards surviving up to this point completely independent of the extant written

3 Neville (2001).

histories (which is not to say that oral versions derived from but not identical with the written histories did not exist). But there were still other stories circulating orally, with less of a potential *political* impact, but nevertheless of some more broad *cultural* value among the secular aristocracy; the evidence for such material was examined in the second part of this monograph both on the basis of the extant texts, and the attestations of the survival in oral form of such narratives. The historical consciousness of that secular aristocracy, by c.800 at the latest, thus embraced historical narratives in Latin that told of a barbarian, pre-Christian past of a particular people; largely orally transmitted legendary narratives that were not necessarily restricted to a single ethnic or political group, but arguably differed in terms of characters, if not with regard to moral or ethical content, depending on linguistic affiliation; and the influence of the Latin, Roman tradition, which included both the secular histories of Rome, and a Christian tradition of historical writing which framed its narratives within the perspective of salvation history. The evidence of extant vernacular narratives and references to oral stories shows that there was a great interest in the distant past, even if that past was of other peoples (and unlike in Jordanes's *Getica*, for instance, remained presented as being about other peoples); however, precisely because it was not 'our' past, it was not neatly compartmentalised into 'Germanic' and 'Roman', or even Gothic or Lombard or Danish or Frankish or Anglo-Saxon pasts. Roman and barbarian pagan pasts could be equally objects of criticism and interest; the rhetoric of rulership could draw on Gothic kings and Scandinavian origins as well as biblically-inspired models of sacred kingship and origins in Troy; narratives about the distant past could have some kind of cultural function even if they were about unrelated peoples and set in faraway locations; and these peoples could include, in a poem like *Widsith*, both those we might identify as 'Germanic', and those who clearly were not.

The vernacular texts examined above, along with *Waltharius* and the evidence for now-lost oral material examined in chapter seven, can be understood as reflexes of a secular, vernacular culture that prized martial values and perhaps even a sort of heroic ethos connected to glory in battle. There was, however, nothing specifically or necessarily 'Germanic' about this: many aspects of the texts that appear to express such values can equally well be found in classical Latin or Greek texts, or, for that matter, in heroic poetry from other regions of the world as well, and later heroic poetry in the Romance languages. That these narratives continued to be cultivated among Germanic-speakers therefore need not say anything about any kind of perceived 'Germanic' identity. In fact, these texts were not, unlike the 'national' histories, a part of a culture of identity, certainly not in a specific sense of ethnic or national identity: insofar

as they reflected a self-perception of their audience, it was more that of a militarised aristocratic class, rather than anything to do with ethnic identity. The reason a common stock of narrative material appears to have circulated among Germanic-speakers was linguistic affinity; the function of these narratives as expressions and repositories of a particular system of values (and as a particular form of entertainment) was shared with other narratives in other languages too.

In other words, we need to distinguish between material that really does have to do with identity in a specific sense ('ethnic' or 'national'), and other texts that are simply bearers of the secular aristocratic values of honour in battle, generosity, and so on, without having more specific identity-forming functions. Of course, the latter category of narrative could also function to create a sense of 'imagined community', but a different—albeit overlapping—one from that imagined in the 'national' histories: a community now united not necessarily by descent, but by common language, shared stories, cultural knowledge, and martial values. However, given that violent conflict was common between different 'national' or 'ethnic' communities that nevertheless shared in this broader form of martial, aristocratic identity, it would be wise not to read too much significance as markers of a wider cultural group identity—whether 'Germanic' or not—into these narratives. And we should not forget that in the early medieval world, violent conflict was indeed common even within a single 'national' or 'ethnic' community sharing in those broader forms of aristocratic identity.

The barbarian past, therefore, could have different functions in early medieval historical consciousness. It could be linked to a myth of very specific origins of a particular polity and, we may speculate, might have been written because it was perceived to have a function of providing a sense of legitimacy and identity to the ruling class of that polity. But equally, the barbarian past could, when not connected in such a specific manner to any polity, be simply a matter of a common cultural background, preserved in its extant form simply because of commonalities of language, because it had a function of shoring up, perhaps, an identity as a particular class with martial values—which values were shared across different political, ethnic, or national groups, and thus, insofar as they say anything about identity, do so in a much more diffuse manner. Ultimately, what is important is that across these texts there is enough evidence to suggest that in secular historical consciousness, breaks between past and present—whether with regard to religion, language, or Roman vs barbarian heritages—were less significant than continuity: both continuity with what were perceived to be direct ancestors, and continuity with what were perceived to be heroic models of martial conduct. The barbarian past was, for

these reasons, valued, and valued enough to want to paper over cracks that modern readers might perceive—and indeed perhaps be more sensitive to than most medieval audiences.

As suggested above, the first extant text that appears to be an expression of a historical consciousness in which there is a synthesis of the barbarian and Roman heritages presented with a minimum of embarrassment was Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum*, composed in the late eighth century. But even earlier than this, and certainly by this point, a so-called 'Germanic' hero like Theoderic might very well have been thought of as Macedonian rather than 'Germanic', and as we see a few generations later in the history of Freculph, Trojan and Scandinavian pasts of the Franks were known and both seem to have been considered plausible—and Freculph, at least, seems not to have felt any compelling need to choose between them. Thus it would appear that a blurring of boundaries was, at least from the time of Paul onwards, not unique to one or two authors, nor specific only to a very particular historical moment, but rather represents the result of an ongoing process of cultural synthesis. This argument is supported by the fact that this conjunction of what we might think of as Greco-Roman and barbarian pasts occurs also in Widukind's Saxon history from the late tenth century, in Dudo's Norman history from the early eleventh century, as well as in later Latin histories—and indeed even in the vernacular *Widsith*.⁴ In none of these cases—and equally, in none of the other cases of extant vernacular material or evidence of its survival—should we think of the narrative material as ancient and unchanging from some purely barbarian, 'Germanic' time of origin.

This is true despite the fact that some early medieval writers also show some awareness of categories such as 'Germanic': their use of such terminology should be treated with some caution. It does not mean that they assigned to such a term the wealth of meaning with regard to ethnicity and identity that the modern scholarship often has done. We should recall that although Charlemagne appears to have been interested in Theoderic, and this interest might have been nourished by his reception of vernacular narratives about Theoderic, he was equally concerned with promoting a Roman- and biblically-inspired image of Frankish rulership. If there was a growing awareness of the linguistic kinship of the Germanic languages in the ninth century and an increasing interest in and reception of texts such as Jordanes's *Getica* with its

4 Hirsch and Lohmann (eds 1935): I,2 (Widukind; he later states that in his opinion the Greek origin is more likely: I,12; thus the Saxon people who for Einhard appear to have been 'Germanic' with regard to location and language are now made more akin to the Franks in terms of their Mediterranean ancestry); Lair (ed. 1865): I,1–2 (Dudo).

story of Scandinavian origins, there was equally a great revival of interest in classical learning in Carolingian Francia, and the traditions of Roman and ecclesiastical historiography certainly had a significant impact on secular elite Carolingian historical consciousness.⁵ There is no warrant for believing that Scandinavian origins and any sort of notion of Germanic kinship, even if just linguistic, were more important for the historical consciousness even of secular elites in this period than the inheritance of Rome. Theoderic was perhaps thought of as 'Germanic' in a manner similar to the way we might think of him as 'Germanic'; but he was also believed to be Macedonian, just as the Franks were now not just Trojan but also Scandinavian. Secular historical consciousness was, in other words, influenced by whatever traditions of ancient history were available, without necessarily differentiating clearly between the Roman and the non-Roman past. Our efforts to distinguish between a Roman and a 'Germanic' antiquity arguably have more to do with modern obsessions than with early medieval people's views of themselves.

If there was no real discrimination between 'Germanic' and Roman heritages, there was also no impermeable boundary between oral and written secular culture. But Latin writing in the form of a 'national' history was a necessary medium of preservation for the secular narratives only when these concerned origins, and/or explicitly demonstrated a continuity between the distant past and the present of a particular people—in other words, when they potentially had a function that could be identity-forming in a political or 'national' sense. Other kinds of secular historical narratives did not *need* to be written, and as we have seen in the previous chapter, there was in fact a strong resistance from the Church to their cultivation—not because they were barbarian or 'Germanic', but simply because they expressed purely secular values that could be perceived as contradicting those of the Church interpreted in a very strict sense.⁶ Nevertheless, given that there was no real chasm between the ecclesiastical and the secular elite, there was considerable give and take between these two milieux; we have seen the extent to which narrative matter in the Germanic vernaculars was wholly imbued with Christianity, and also how, in *Waltharius*, a secular tale drawing on oral vernacular material was composed in Virgilian verse and influenced by an explicitly Christian and religious Latin epic.

Written literature—regardless of genre and language—was largely in the hands of clerics (or at least of people with a substantial Latin and religious

5 The scholarship on these subjects is vast; for some useful examples, see Garrison (2000); Goetz (2000); Innes (1997); McKitterick (2004b): 28–32; 39–48; 218–64; 273–83; McKitterick (2006) 35–61.

6 See further Wormald (1978): 46–8.

education). The religious were often censorious of narratives that seemed to praise pagan rulers. Nevertheless, and precisely because there was no real boundary between the ecclesiastical and lay elites, clerics also produced texts that reflected the historical consciousness of the secular elite, to whom the religious were related in multifarious ways. However much lay elite culture was influenced by the teachings of the Church, it nevertheless retained historical traditions, sometimes orally transmitted, and sometimes in the vernacular, in which continuities with the distant past were more important than breaks in the flow of history. Because the Church had a virtual monopoly on writing, there is a far greater number of texts that propagate the ecclesiastical viewpoint. But from the point in which Catholic Christianity became the official religion of the western kingdoms, the culture of the Church and the culture of the lay aristocracy were not in opposition to each other and were in fact—the clerical hard core notwithstanding—very much alike.⁷ Vernacular texts such as *Beowulf*, references to secular pastimes amongst the clergy, and, equally, the Latin ‘national’ histories, are all evidence of the cross-fertilisation of lay and clerical, oral and literate, vernacular and Latin cultures, to the extent that it would in fact be grossly inaccurate to talk in terms of such pairs of opposites. While there were certainly varying emphases in the different milieux, there were no stark dichotomies; this is not a period of cultural clash, but of conjunction and compromise.⁸ It is worth stressing, moreover, the more or less obvious point that there is a difference between secular (but not un-Christian) and pagan, just as there is a difference between lay Christian and clerical. Secular literature—whether pagan Roman or pagan barbarian—might have been suspect for some elements among the clergy because it was not ‘Christian’ enough, and the Church clearly attempted to impose strict religious standards on lay people; but the Church nevertheless had to accept that lay believers could not be held to the same standards as ordained clergy—and this did not necessarily mean that they, and their culture, were ultimately not Christian.⁹

It is obvious that the ideology of Roman imperialism, ultimately derived from Rome, coupled—crucially—with the *religion* of Rome, had a powerful attraction for all the people—Goths, Burgundians, Franks, Anglo-Saxons, Saxons—who came into its orbit.¹⁰ It is also clear that in general, the ideology of Roman-ness was not perceived to be in mortal conflict with whatever was

7 Wormald (1978): 42–8; 64–5.

8 Similarly, but specifically with regard to the Frankish kingdoms: Goetz (2004).

9 Wormald (1978): 44–6.

10 Heather (2013); McKitterick (2006): 35–61; McKitterick (2014); Riché (1995): 153–201; Julia Smith (2005): 28–31; 255–92; Wickham (2009): 200–1; 561–2.

dominant before; whatever potential for conflict there might have been tended to be minimised in the extant texts, and the narrative of 'national' history presented a more or less continuous progress from the barbarian, pagan past to the Christian, Romanised, and often imperial present.¹¹

The process of forming early medieval historical consciousness was therefore, at least in part, one in which the boundaries between the categories of barbarian and Roman were—at the very least—significantly blurred; and it is likely that even at the beginning of the period in question, these divisions were less meaningful for contemporaries than they have appeared for us. It seems to be the case that the binary oppositions and clear divisions so convenient for modern scholarly purposes were less important in the minds of at least those medieval people who produced texts concerned with the issues of identity and the past than they have been for more recent historians. Perhaps, in this respect, modern historians would be wise to follow the lead of their late antique and early medieval forebears.

11 For this reason, a text like *Beowulf* is so unusual, in that it looks back at the distant past and sees it, explicitly, as a problem because of the difference in religion—but nevertheless cannot refrain from presenting the past as something also admirable and wondrous. But because of the ambiguous value of the distant past, *Beowulf* makes no direct links between that distant past and the present: in a secular sphere, to do so would be to undermine the foundations of aristocratic self-consciousness. Ancient history could only be allowed to be problematic if treated in a manner that abstracted it from an explicit connection with the present; the sense of continuity was too important to the aristocracy of the present to allow for a shadow to be cast on its past.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

- Aeneid* = R.A.B. Mynors, ed. 1969. "P. Vergilii Maronis Aeneidos". In *P. Vergilii Maronis Opera*: 103–422. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Alessio, Gian Carlo, ed. and trans. 1982. *Cronaca di Novalesa*. Turin: Einaudi.
- Allen, Michael Idomir, ed. 2002. "Historiarum libri XII". In *Frechulfus Lexoviensis: Opera omnia*: 9–724. CCCM 169. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Ammianus = Wolfgang Seyfarth, ed. 1976. *Ammiani Marcellini rerum gestarum libri qui supersunt*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Anderson, W.B., ed. and trans. 1930–65. *Sidonius: Poems and Letters*. 2 vols. LCL 296, 420. London: Heinemann.
- Atlaqviða* = "Atlaqviða in grœnlensca". In Neckel and Kuhn, eds 1983: 240–7.
- Bandy, Anastasius C., ed. and trans. 1983. *Ioannes Lydus: On Powers, or The Magistracies of the Roman State*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society.
- Bartsch, Karl, Helmut de Boor, and Roswitha Wisniewski, eds. 1988. *Das Nibelungenlied*, 22nd edn. Wiesbaden: Brockhaus.
- Beowulf* = R.D. Fulk, Robert E. Bjork, and John D. Niles, eds. 2008. *Klaeber's Beowulf: Fourth Edition*. TOES 21. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Bidez, Joseph, Christian Lacombrade, and Gabriel Rochefort, eds and trans. 1932–64. *Julien: Œuvres complètes*. 2 vols. Paris: Les belles lettres.
- Bird, H.W., trans. 1993. *Eutropius: Breviarum*. TTH 14. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- . 1994. *Aurelius Victor: De Caesaribus*. TTH 17. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, ed. 1941. *Snorri Sturluson: Heimskringla*, vol. 1. ÍF 26. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritfélag. [Cited by saga title and chapter.]
- Bluhme, Friedrich, ed. 1875–89. "Edictum Theoderici regis". In MGH LL V: 149–68. Hanover: Hahn
- Braune, Wilhelm, and Ernst A. Ebbinghaus, eds. 1994. *Althochdeutsches Lesebuch*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Burgess, R.W., ed. and trans. 1993. *The Chronicle of Hydatius*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- . 2001a. "The Gallic Chronicle of 452: A New Critical Edition with a Brief Introduction". In Mathisen and Shanzer, eds 2001: 52–84.
- . 2001b. "The Gallic Chronicle of 511: A New Critical Edition with a Brief Introduction". In Mathisen and Shanzer, eds 2001: 85–100.
- Campbell, Alistair, ed. 1962. *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*. London: Nelson.
- Cardelle de Hartmann, Carmen, ed. 2001. *Iohannis Biclarensis Chronicon*. CCSL 173A. Turnhout: Brepols.

- Cary, Earnest, and Herbert Baldwin Foster, ed. and trans. 1914–27. *Dio's Roman History*, 9 vols. LCL 32, 37, 53, 66, 82–3, 175–7. London: Heinemann.
- Colgrave, Bertram, and Mynors, R.A.B., ed. and trans. 1969. *Bede: Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Cunningham, M.P., ed. 1966. *Aurelii Prudentii Clementis carmina*. CCSL 126. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Davis, Raymond, trans. 2000. *The Book of Pontiffs (Liber Pontificalis): The Ancient Biographies of the First Ninety Roman Bishops to AD 715*, 2nd edn. TTH 6. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- Delehaye, Hippolyte, ed. 1912. "Passio S. Sabae". In *Saints de Thrace et de Mésie*, Hippolyte Delehaye, ed.: 216–24. *Analecta Bollandiana* 31: 161–300.
- Deliannis, Deborah Mauskopf, ed. 2006. *Agnellus Ravennatis Liber pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis*. CCCM 199. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Deor = *ASPR* 3: 178–9.
- Dewing, H.B., ed. and trans. 1914–28. *Procopius: History of the Wars*, 5 vols. LCL 48, 81, 107, 173, 217. London: Heinemann.
- Diekamp, Wilhelm, ed. 1881. "Vita sancti Liudgeri auctore Alfrido". In *Die Vitae Sancti Liudgeri*: 1–53. *Die Geschichtsquellen des Bistums Münster* 4. Münster: Theissing.
- Dodgeon, M.H., trans. 1996. "The Sons of Constantine: Libanius *Oratio* LIX (Royal Discourse upon Constantius and Constans)". In *From Constantine to Julian: Pagan and Byzantine Views: A Source History*, Samuel N.C. Lieu and Dominic Montserrat, eds: 164–205. London: Routledge.
- Dronke, Ursula, ed. and trans. 1997. *The Poetic Edda*, vol. 2: *Mythological Poems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Droysen, Hans, ed. 1879. *Eutropi Breviarum ab Vrbe condita cum versionibus graecis et Pavli Landolfique additamentis*. MGH AA 2. Berlin: Weidmann.
- Duchesne, Louis, ed. and trans. 1886–92. *Le liber pontificalis*. 3 vols. BÉFAR 3. Paris: E. Thorin.
- Dümmler, Ernst, ed. 1895. *Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, vol. 2. MGH Epp 4. Berlin: Weidmann.
- Eadie, J.W., ed. 1967. *The "Breviarum" of Festus: A Critical Edition with Historical Commentary*. London: Athlone Press.
- Ehwald, Rudolf, ed. 1919. "De metris et enigmatibus ac pedum regibus". In *Aldhelmi opera*: 33–204. MGH AA 15. Berlin: Weidmann.
- Eisenhut, Werner, ed. 1973. *Dictys Cretensis: Ephemeridos Belli Troiani*, 3rd edn. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Ewald, Paul, and Ludo M. Hartmann, eds. 1891–9. *Gregorii I Papae registrum epistolarum*. 2 vols. MGH Epp 1–2. Berlin: Weidmann. [Cited by book and document number.]
- Faral, Edmond, ed. and trans. 1932. *Ermold le Noir: Poème sur Louis le pieux et épitres au Roi Pépin*. Paris: Les belles lettres.

- Faulkes, Anthony, ed. 1982–98. *Snorri Sturluson: Edda*. 3 vols in 4 parts. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- Favrod, Justin, ed. 1993. *La Chronique de Marius d'Avenches (455–581): Texte, traduction et commentaire*. Cahiers lausannois d'histoire médiévale 4. Lausanne: Section d'histoire, Faculté des lettres, Université de Lausanne.
- Finch, R.G., ed. and trans. 1965. *Völsunga saga*. London: Nelson. [Cited by chapter.]
- Foerster, Richard, ed. 1907. *Libanii opera*, vol. 4: *Orationes LI–LXIV*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Fredegar = Bruno Krusch, ed. 1888. “Chronicarum quae dicuntur Fredegarii scholastici”. In MGH SRM 2: 1–168. Hanover: Hahn.
- Friis-Jensen, Karsten, and Peter Fisher, ed. and trans. 2015. *Saxo Grammaticus: Gesta Danorum*. 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gertz, Martin Clarentius, ed. 1917–18a [repr. 1970]. “Chronicon Lethrense”. In *Scriptores Minores Historiae Danicae Medii Aevi*. 2 vols, 1: 43–53. Copenhagen: Selskabet for Udgivelse af Kilder til dansk Historie.
- . 1917–18b [repr. 1970]. “[Sven Aggesen:]Brevis historia regvm Dacie”. In *Scriptores Minores Historiae Danicae Medii Aevi*. 2 vols, 1: 94–141. Copenhagen: Selskabet for Udgivelse af Kilder til dansk Historie.
- Getica = Theodor Mommsen, ed. 1882. “De origine actibusque Getarum”. In *Iordanis Romana et Getica*: 53–138. MGH AA 5/1. Hanover: Hahn.
- Glorie, Franciscus, ed. 1975. *Hieronymus: Commentariorum in Hiezechielem libri XIV*. CCSL 75. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Grottasqngr = “Grottasqngr”. In Neckel and Kuhn, eds 1983: 297–301.
- Guðni Jónsson, ed. 1936. *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar*. ÍF 7. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritfélag.
- Haefele, Hans F., ed. 1959. *Notkeri Balbvli Gesta Karoli magni imperatoris*. MGH SRG NS 12. Berlin: Weidmann.
- Haefele, Hans F., ed. and trans. 2002. *Ekkehard IV: St. Galler Kloster geschichten*, 4th edn. AQDGM 10. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Hamðismál = “Hamðismál”. In Neckel and Kuhn, eds 1983: 268–74.
- Harting-Corrêa, Alice L., ed. and trans. 1996. *Walahfrid Strabo's “Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum”*. MST 19. Leiden : Brill.
- Heather, Peter, and John Matthews, trans. 1991. *The Goths in the Fourth Century*. TTH 11. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- Hering, Wolfgang, ed. 1987. *C. Ivlii Caesaris Commentarii rerum gestarvm*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Herren, Michael, ed. and trans. 1991. “The *De Imagine tetrici* of Walahfrid Strabo: Edition and Translation”. *Journal of Medieval Latin* 1: 118–39.
- Heubner, Heinrich, ed. 1983. *P. Cornelii Taciti libri qui supersunt*, vol. 1: *Ab excessu diui Augusti*. Leipzig: Teubner.

- Hildebrandslied* = "Hildebrandslied". In Braune and Ebbinghaus, eds 1994: 84–5. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Hirsch, Paul, and Hans-Eberhard Lohmann, eds. 1935. *Widukindi monachi Corbeiensis Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum libri tres*. MGH SRG 60. Hanover: Hahn.
- Hlǫðsquiða* = "Hunnenschlachtlied oder Hlǫðsquiða". In Neckel and Kuhn, eds 1983: 302–12.
- Hohl, Ernst, Christa Samberger, and Wolfgang Seyfarth, eds. 1965–71. *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*. 2 vols. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Holder-Egger, Oswald, ed. 1911. *Einhardi Vita Karoli Magni*. MGH SRG 25. Hanover: Hahn.
- Hyndluljóð* = "Hyndluljóð". In Neckel and Kuhn, eds 1983: 288–96.
- Ihm, Maximilian, ed. 1933. *C. Suetoni Tranquilli opera*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Jacoby, Felix, ed. 1926 [repr. 1961]. *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, vol. 2A. Leiden: Brill.
- James, M.R., ed. 1917. "Two Lives of St. Ethelbert, King and Martyr". *EHR* 32: 214–44.
- Jones, Horace Leonard, ed. and trans. 1917–33. *Strabo: Geography*, 8 vols. LCL 49, 50, 182, 196, 211, 223, 241, 267. London: Heinemann.
- Kålund, K., ed. 1917–18. "Langfeðgatal". In *Alfræði islenzk*, vol. 3: 58–9. Copenhagen: S.L. Møllers bogtrykkeri.
- Kleiber, Wolfgang, and Ernst Hellgardt, eds. 2004. *Otfrid von Weissenburg: Evangelienbuch*. 2 vols. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- König, Ingemar, ed. and trans. 1997. *Theodericiana primum ab Henrico Valesio edita*. Texte zur Forschung 69. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Krusch, Bruno, ed. 1885. "[Gregorii episcopi Turonensis] Liber in gloria martyrum". In MGH SRM I/2: 484–561. Hanover: Hahn.
- . 1896. "Vitae Caesarii episcopi Arelatensis libri duo". In MGH SRM 3: 433–501. Hanover: Hahn.
- . 1902. "Vitae Columbani abbatis discipulorumque eius libri duo auctore Iona". In MGH SRM 4: 1–152. Hanover: Hahn.
- Lair, Jules, ed. 1865. *Dudonis Sancti Quintini De moribus et actis primorum Normanniæ ducum*. Caen: F. Le Blanc-Hardel.
- Lehmann, Paul, ed. 1918. *Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Deutschlands und der Schweiz*, vol. 1. Munich: C.H. Beck.
- Lienert, Elisabeth, Esther Vollmer-Eicken, and Dorit Wolter, eds. 2008. *Dietrich-Testimonien des 6. bis 16. Jahrhunderts*. TUMH 4. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Löfstedt, Bengt, Louis Holtz, and Adele Kibre, eds. 1986. *Smaragdus: Liber in partibus Donati*. CCCM 68. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Malone, Kemp, ed. 1962. *Widsith*, 2nd edn. Anglistica 13. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger.
- . 1977. *Deor*, 4th edn. London: Methuen.
- Martin, Gunther, ed. and trans. 2006. *Dexipp von Athen: Edition, Übersetzung und begleitende Studien*. Classica Monacensia 32. Tübingen: Günter Narr.

- Martín, José Carlos, ed. 2003. *Isidori Hispalensis Chronica*. CCSL 112. Turnhout: Brepols.
- . 2006. *Scripta de vita Isidori Hispalensis episcopi*. CCSL 113b. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Mayhoff, Karl, ed. 1892–1909. *C. Plinii Secundi naturalis historiae libri XXXVII*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Mommsen, Theodor, ed. 1882. “De summa temporum vel origine actibusque gentis Romanorum”. In *Iordanis Romana et Getica*: 1–53. MGH AA 5/1. Hanover: Hahn.
- . 1892a. “Prosperi Tironis Epitoma Chronicon”. In *Chronica minora*, vol. 1: 433–501. MGH AA 9. Hanover: Hahn.
- . 1892b. “Prosperi continuatio Havniensis”. In *Chronica minora*, vol. 1: 298–339. MGH AA 9. Hanover: Hahn.
- . 1898. “Chronica maiora ad a. 725”. In *Chronica minora*, vol. 3: 223–333. MGH AA 13. Berlin: Weidmann.
- Muir, Bernard J., ed. 2000. *The Exeter Anthology of Old English Poetry*, 2nd edn. Exeter: Exeter University Press.
- Müller, Ernst, ed. 1907. *Nithardi historiarum libri IIII*. MGH SRG 44. Hanover: Hahn.
- Murray, Alexander Callander, trans. 2000. *From Roman to Merovingian Gaul: A Reader*. Readings in Medieval Civilizations and Cultures 5. Peterborough: Broadview Press.
- Neckel, Gustav, and Hans Kuhn, eds. 1983. *Edda: Die Lieder des Codex Regius nebst verwandten Denkmälern*, vol 1: *Text*, 5th edn. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
- Ogilvie, R.M., and Michael Winterbottom, eds. 1975. *Cornelii Taciti opera minora*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Orosius = Marie-Pierre Arnaud-Lindet, ed. and trans. 1990. *Orose: Histoires*, 3 vols. Paris: Les belles lettres.
- Paschoud, François, ed. and trans. 1971. *Zosime: Histoire Nouvelle*, 3 vols. Paris: Les belles lettres.
- Pichlmayr, F.R., and R. Gruendel, eds. 1966. *Sexti Aurelii Victoris Liber de Caesaribus, praecedunt origo gentis Romanae et liber de viris illustribus urbis Romae, subsequitur epitome de Caesaribus*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Platnauer, Maurice, ed. and trans. 1922. *Claudian*. 2 vols. LCL 135–6. London: Heinemann.
- von Salis, L.R., ed. 1892, “Liber constitutionum sive lex Gundobada”. In *Leges Burgundionum*: 29–122. MGH LL II/1. Hanover: Hahn.
- Santini, Carlo, ed. 1979. *Evtropii Breviarvm ab vrbe condita*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Schmiedler, Bernhard, and Werner Trillmich, ed. and trans. 1968. “Adam von Bremen: Bischofsgeschichte der Hamburger Kirche”. In *Quellen des 9. und 11. Jahrhunderts zur Geschichte der hamburgischen Kirche und des Reiches*: 135–503. AQDGM 11. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Schnetz, Joseph, and Marianne Zumschlinge, eds. 1990 [orig. 1929]. *Itineraria Romana*, vol. 2: *Ravennatis Anonymi cosmographia et Guidonis Geographia*. Stuttgart: Teubner.
- Scragg, Donald, ed. 1981. *The Battle of Maldon*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

- Seel, Otto, ed. 1972. *Epitoma historiarum Pompei Trogii*. Stuttgart: Teubner.
- Sehlmeyer, Markus, ed. and trans. 2004. *Origo gentis Romanae: die Ursprünge des Römischen Volkes*. Texte zur Forschung 82. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Shackleton Bailey, D.R., ed. 1987. *M. Tullii Ciceronis Epistulae ad Atticum*. Stuttgart: Teubner.
- . 1988a. *M. Tullii Ciceronis Epistulae ad familiares*. Stuttgart: Teubner.
- . 1988b. *M. Annaei Lucani De bello civili libri X*. Stuttgart: Teubner.
- Shanzer, Danuta, and Ian N. Wood, trans. 2002. *Avitus of Vienne: Letters and Selected Prose*. TTH 38. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- Silberman, Alain, ed. and trans. 1988. *Pomponius Méla: Chorographie*. Paris: Les belles lettres.
- Stevenson, William Henry, ed. 1959. *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Stratmann, Martina, ed. 1998. *Flodoardi Historia Remensis Ecclesiae*. MGH SS 36. Hanover: Hahn.
- Stückelberger, Alfred, and Gerd Graßhoff, eds and trans. 2006. *Klaudios Ptolemaios: Handbuch der Geographie*. 2 vols. Basel: Schwabe.
- Tremp, Ernst, ed. and trans. 1995a. "Astronomus: Vita Hludowici imperatoris". In MGH SRG 64: 279–555. Hanover: Hahn.
- . 1995b. "Theganus: Gesta Hludowici imperatoris". In MGH SRG 64: 167–278. Hanover: Hahn.
- de Vogüé, Adalbert, ed. 1978–80. *Grégoire le Grand: Dialogues*. 3 vols. Sources chrétiennes 251, 260, 265. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf.
- Vǫlundarqviða* = "Vǫlundarqviða". In Neckel and Kuhn, eds 1983: 116–23.
- Waitz, Georg, ed. 1881. "Chronicon universale – 741". In MGH SS 13: 4–19. Hanover: Hahn.
- Waldere I and II* = Arne Zettersten, ed. 1979. *Waldere*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Waltharius* = Karl Strecker, ed. 1951. "Waltharius". In MGH Poet. 6/1: 24–85. Weimar: Böhlau.
- Waltharius praef.* [Geraldus-preface to the *Waltharius*] = Karl Strecker, ed. 1939. "Prolog des Geraldus zum *Waltharius*". In MGH Poet. 5/2: 405–8. Weimar: Böhlau.
- Watt, W.S., ed. 1988. *Vellei Paterculi Historiarum ad M. Vinicium Consulem libri duo*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Wattenbach, Wilhelm, ed. 1888. "Passio S. Sigismundi regis". In MGH SRM 2: 329–40. Hanover: Hahn.
- Widsith* = *ASPR* 3: 149–53.
- Winterbottom, Michael, ed. and trans. 1978. *Gildas: De excidio Britonum*. Arthurian Period Sources 7. London: Phillimore.
- von Winterfeld, Paul, ed. 1899. "Poetae Saxonis annalium de gestis Caroli magni imperatoris". In MGH Poet. 4/1: 1–71. Hanover: Hahn. [Cited by book and line number.]

Secondary Literature

- Adams, Jeremy duQuesnay. 1969. "The Political Grammar of Isidore of Seville". In *Arts libéraux et philosophie au moyen âge*: 763–75. Montréal: Institut d'études médiévales.
- . 1997. "The Political Grammar of Early Hispano-Gothic Historians". In *Medieval Iberia: Essays on the History and Literature of Medieval Spain*, Donald J. Kagay and Joseph T. Snow, eds: 1–25. Ibérica 25. New York: Peter Lang,.
- Alexander, Michael. 2002. *A History of Old English Literature*. Peterborough: Broadview Press.
- Alfonsi, Luigi. 1976. "Romani e barbari nella *Historia Langobardorum* di Paolo Diacono". *Romanobarbarica* 1: 7–23.
- Allen, Michael Idomir. 2003. "Universal History 300–1000: Origins and Western Developments". In Deliyannis, ed. 2003: 17–42.
- Amory, Patrick. 1993. "The Meaning and Purpose of Ethnic Terminology in the Burgundian Laws". *EME* 2: 1–28.
- . 1994. "Names, Ethnic Identity, and Community in Fifth- and Sixth-Century Burgundy". *Viator* 25: 1–30.
- . 1997. *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy, 489–554*. CSMLT 33. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Andersen, Benedict. 2006. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. edn. London: Verso.
- Andersson, Theodore M. 1988a. "Die Oral-Formulaic Poetry im Germanischen". In Beck, ed. 1988: 1–14.
- . 1988b. "Walter Haug's Heldensagenmodell". In *Germania: Comparative Studies in the Old Germanic Languages and Literatures*, Daniel G. Calder and T. Craig Christy, eds: 127–41. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer.
- . 1997. "Sources and Analogues". In Bjork and Niles, eds 1997: 125–148.
- Anlezark, Daniel. 2006. *Water and Fire: The Myth of the Flood in Anglo-Saxon England*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Anton, Hans Hubert. 1994. "Origo gentis—Volksgeschichte: Zur Auseinandersetzung mit Walter Goffarts Werk 'The Narrators of Barbarian History'". In Scharer and Scheibelreiter, eds 1994: 262–307.
- Arnold, Jonathan J. 2013. "Theoderic's Invincible Mustache". *JLA* 6: 152–83.
- . 2014. *Theoderic and the Roman Imperial Restoration*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Assmann, Jan. 1992. *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*. Munich: C.H. Beck.
- Ausbüttel, Frank M. 2003. *Theoderich der Große*. Darmstadt: Primus.
- Ausenda, Giorgio, Paolo Delogu and Chris Wickham, eds. 2009. *The Langobards before the Frankish Conquest: An Ethnographic Perspective*. SHA 8. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.
- Banniard, Michel. 1992. *Viva voce: communication écrite et communication orale du IV^e au IX^e siècle en Occident latin*. CÉA MÂ 25. Paris: Institut des Études Augustiniennes.

- . 1997. *Du latin aux langues romaines*. Paris: Nathan.
- Barlow, Jonathan. 1995. "Gregory of Tours and the Myth of the Trojan Origin of the Franks". *FMSt* 29: 86–95.
- Barnes, Timothy David. 1978. *The Sources of the Historia Augusta*. Collection Latomus 155. Brussels: Latomus.
- . 1998. *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation of Historical Reality*. Cornell Studies in Classical Philology 56. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Becher, Matthias. 2003. *Charlemagne*. Trans. David S. Bachrach. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- . 2011. *Chlodwig I: Der Aufstieg der Merowinger und das Ende der antiken Welt*. Munich: C.H. Beck.
- Beck, Heinrich. 1974. "Zur literaturgeschichtlichen Stellung des althochdeutschen Ludwigsliedes und einiger verwandter Zeitgedichte". *ZfdA* 103: 37–51.
- , ed. 1988. *Heldensage und Heldendichtung im Germanischen*. ERGA 2. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Benson, Larry D. 1967. "The Pagan Coloring of *Beowulf*". In *Old English Poetry: Fifteen Essays*, ed. Robert P. Creed: 193–213. Providence: Brown University Press.
- Berend, Nora, Przemysław Urbańczyk and Przemysław Wiszewski. 2014. *Central Europe in the High Middle Ages: Bohemia, Hungary, and Poland, c.900–c.1300*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bethmann, Ludwig, and Georg Waitz. 1878 = *HL* [introduction and notes].
- Beumann, Helmut. 1950. *Widukind von Corvei: Untersuchungen zur Geschichtsschreibung und Ideengeschichte des 10. Jahrhunderts*. Abhandlungen über Corveyer Geschichtsschreibung 3. Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger.
- . 1970. "Historiographische Konzeption und politische Ziele Widukinds von Corvei". In *La storiografia altomedievale: 875–94*. Sett. 17. Spoleto: Presso la sede del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo.
- . 1982. "Die Hagiographie 'bewältigt' Unterwerfung und Christianisierung der Sachsen durch Karl den Großen". In *Cristianizzazione ed organizzazione ecclesiastica delle campagne nell'alto medioevo: Espansione e resistenze*: 129–63. Sett. 28. Spoleto: Presso la sede del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo.
- Bird, H.W. 1984. *Sextus Aurelius Victor: A Historiographical Study*. ARCA 14. Liverpool: Francis Cairns.
- Birley, A.R. 2003. "The *Historia Augusta* and Pagan Historiography". In Marasco, ed. 2003: 127–49.
- Bjork, Robert E., and John D. Niles, eds 1997. *A Beowulf Handbook*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Bjornlie, M. Shane. 2012. *Politics and Tradition Between Rome, Ravenna and Constantinople: A Study of Cassiodorus and the Variae, 527–554*. CSMLT 89. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- . 2014. "Law, Ethnicity and Taxes in Ostrogothic Italy: A Case for Continuity, Adaptation and Departure". *EME* 22: 138–70.
- Blockley, R.C. 1975. *Ammianus Marcellinus: A Study of His Historiography and Political Thought*. Collection Latomus 141. Brussels: Latomus.
- . 1981. *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, vol. 1. ARCA 6. Liverpool: Francis Cairns.
- . 1982. "Roman–Barbarian Marriages in the Later Empire". *Florilegium* 4: 63–79.
- den Boer, W. 1972. *Some Minor Roman Historians*. Leiden: Brill.
- Bonamente, Giorgio. 2003. "Minor Latin Historians of the Fourth Century AD". In Marasco, ed. 2003: 85–125.
- Borchert, Sabine. 2005. "Das Bild Theoderichs des Großen in der Chronik des sog. Fredegar". In *Geschehenes und Geschriebenes: Studien zu Ehren von Günther S. Henrich und Klaus-Peter Maschke*, ed. Sebastian Kolditz and Ralf C. Müller: 435–52. Leipzig: Eudora-Verlag.
- Bornholdt, Claudia. 2005. *Engaging Moments: The Origins of Medieval Bridal-Quest Narrative*. ERGA 46. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Borri, Francesco. 2011. "Murder by Death: Alboin's Life, End(s), and Means". *Millennium: Jahrbuch zu Kultur und Geschichte des ersten Jahrtausends n. Chr.* 8: 223–70.
- . 2014. "Romans Growing Beards: Identity and Historiography in Seventh-Century Italy". *Viator* 45: 39–71.
- Borst, Arno. 1966. "Das Bild der Geschichte in der Enzyklopädie Isidors von Sevilla". *DA* 22: 1–62.
- Bostock, J. Knight. 1976. *A Handbook on Old High German Literature*, 2nd edn by K.C. King and D.R. McIntock. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Boutet, Dominique. 2012. "The *Chanson de geste* and Orality". In Reichl, ed. 2012: 353–69.
- Bowden, Sarah. 2012. *Bridal-Quest Epics in Medieval Germany: A Revisionary Approach*. London: Modern Humanities Research Association.
- Bowra, C.M. 1957. *The Meaning of a Heroic Age*. Earl Grey Memorial Lecture 37. Newcastle: n.p.
- Bradley, Dennis R. 1993. "*In altum laxare vela compulsus*: The 'Getica' of Jordanes". *Hermes* 121: 211–36.
- Brady, Caroline Agnes von Egmont. 1943. *The Legends of Ermanaric*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bredenhof, Thomas A. 2001. *Textual Histories: Readings in the "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle"*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- von den Brincken, Anna-Dorothee. 1957. *Studien zur lateinischen Weltchronistik bis in das Zeitalter Ottos von Freising*. Düsseldorf: Tritsch.
- Brown, Giles. 1994. "Introduction: The Carolingian Renaissance". In McKitterick, ed. 1994: 1–51.

- Bruce, I.A.F. 1970. "Theopompus and Classical Greek Historiography". *History and Theory* 9: 86–109.
- Brunhölzl, Franz. 1988. *Was ist der Waltharius?* Abhandlungen der Marburger Gelehrten Gesellschaft 1988/21. Munich: Wilhelm Fink.
- Bullough, Donald A. 1991. "Ethnic History and the Carolingians: An Alternative Reading of Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum*". In *Carolingian Renewal: Sources and Heritage*, Donald Bullough, ed: 97–122. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- . 1993. "What Has Ingeld to Do with Lindisfarne?". *ASE* 22: 93–125.
- Burgess, Richard W., and Michael Kulikowski. 2013. *Mosaics of Time: The Latin Chronicle Traditions from the First Century BC to the Sixth Century AD*, vol. 1: *A Historical Introduction to the Chronicle Genre from Its Origins to the High Middle Ages*. SEM 33. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Burrow, J.A. 2008. *The Poetry of Praise*. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 69. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cameron, Angus F. 1969. "Saint Gildas and Scyld Scefing". *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 70: 240–46.
- Cameron, Averil. 1985. *Procopius and the Sixth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cannone, Giuseppe. 1984. "Storia ed esegesi biblica nell'*Historia Gothorum* di Isidoro di Siviglia". *Romanobarbarica* 8: 5–31.
- Cavill, Paul. 2004. "Christianity and Theology in *Beowulf*". In *The Christian Tradition in Anglo-Saxon England: Approaches to Current Scholarship and Teaching*, Paul Cavill, ed.: 15–39. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer.
- Chadwick, Hector Munro. 1912. *The Heroic Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Charles-Edwards, Thomas. 2003a. "Nations and Kingdoms: A View from Above". In Charles-Edwards, ed. 2003: 23–58.
- . 2003b. "Conversion to Christianity". In Charles-Edwards, ed. 2003: 103–39.
- , ed. 2003. *The Short Oxford History of the British Isles: After Rome*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chase, Colin, ed. 1981. *The Dating of Beowulf*. TOES 6. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Chauviot, Alain. 1984. "Représentations du Barbaricum chez les barbares au service de l'Empire au I^{er} siècle après J.-C.". *Ktèma: Civilisations de l'Orient, de la Grèce et de Rome antique* 9: 145–57.
- Christensen, Arne Soby. 2002. *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths: Studies in a Migration Myth*. Trans. Heidi Flegel. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.
- Christie, Neil. 1995. *The Lombards*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Chrysos, Evangelos, and Andreas Schwarcz, eds. 1989. *Das Reich und die Barbaren*. VIÖG 29. Vienna: Böhlau.

- Church, S.D. 2008. "Paganism in Conversion-Age Anglo-Saxon England: The Evidence of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* Reconsidered". *History* 93: 162–80.
- Clark, Gillian. 2011. "Augustine and the Merciful Barbarians". In Mathisen and Shanzer, eds 2011: 33–42.
- Claude, Dietrich. 1989. "Zur Begründung familiärer Beziehungen zwischen dem Kaiser und barbarischen Herrschern". In Chrysos and Schwarcz, eds 1989: 25–56.
- Clay, John-Henry. 2013. "Adventus, Warfare, and the Britons in the Development of West Saxon Identity". In Pohl and Heydemann, eds 2013a: 169–213.
- Cleasby, Richard, and Gudbrand Vigfusson. 1957. *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. 2nd edn, with a Supplement by William Craigie. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Clover, Carol J. 1980. "The Germanic Context of the Unferþ Episode". *Speculum* 55: 444–68.
- Collins, Roger. 1994. "Isidore, Maximus, and the *Historia Gothorum*". In Scharer and Scheibelreiter, eds 1994: 345–58.
- . 1998. *Charlemagne*. Basingstoke: MacMillan.
- . 2004. *Visigothic Spain, 409–711*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- . 2007. *Die Fredegar-Chroniken*. MGH Studien und Texte 44. Hanover: Hahn.
- Cooke, John Daniel. 1927. "Euhemerism: A Mediaeval Interpretation of Classical Paganism". *Speculum* 2: 396–410.
- Cornford, Benjamin. 2006. "Paul the Deacon's Understanding of Identity, His Attitude to Barbarians, and His 'Strategies of Distinction'". In Corradini et al, eds 2006: 47–60.
- Corradini, Richard, Max Diesenberger and Helmut Reimitz, eds. 2003. *The Construction of Communities in the Early Middle Ages: Texts, Resources and Artefacts*. TRW 12. Leiden: Brill.
- Corradini, Richard, Rob Meens, Christina Pössel and Philip Shaw, eds. 2006. *Texts and Identities in the Early Middle Ages*. Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 12. Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Costambeys, Marios, Matthew Innes and Simon MacLean. 2011. *The Carolingian World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Coumert, Magali. 2007. *Origines des peuples: les récits du Haut Moyen Âge occidental (550–850)*. CÉA MÂ 42. Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes.
- Crépin, André. 2005. "Introduction". In *Bède le Vénérable: Histoire ecclésiastique du peuple anglais*, Michael Lapidge, ed., trans. Pierre Monat and Philippe Robin, with introduction and notes by André Crépin, I: 7–90. 3 vols. Sources Chrétiennes 489–91. Paris: Éditions du Cerf.
- Croke, Brian. 1987. "Cassiodorus and the *Getica* of Jordanes". *Classical Philology* 82: 117–34.
- . 2001. *Count Marcellinus and His Chronicle*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . 2003. "Latin Historiography and the Barbarian Kingdoms". In Marasco, ed. 2003: 349–89.

- . 2012. "Historiography". In Johnson, ed. 2012: 405–36.
- Curta, Florin. 2001. *The Making of the Slavs: History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region, c.500–700*. CSMLT 52. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2005. "Frontier Ethnogenesis in Late Antiquity: The Danube, the Tervingi, and the Slavs". In *Borders, Barriers, and Ethnogenesis: Frontiers in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, Florin Curta, ed.: 173–204. SEM 12. Turnhout: Brepols.
- DeGregorio, Scott, ed. 2010. *The Cambridge Companion to Bede*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Deliyannis, Deborah Mauskopf, ed. 2003. *Historiography in the Middle Ages*. Leiden: Brill.
- Delogu, Paolo. 1995. "Lombard and Carolingian Italy". In *New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 2: *c.700–c.900*, Rosamond McKitterick, ed.: 290–319. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2004. "Longobardi e Romani: altre congetture". In *Il regno dei Longobardi in Italia: archeologia, società e istituzioni*, ed. Stefano Gasparri: 93–171. Istituzioni e società 4. Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo.
- . 2009. "Kingship and the Shaping of the Lombard Body Politic". In Ausenda, Delogu and Wickham, eds 2009: 251–88.
- Demandt, Alexander. 1965. *Zeitkritik und Geschichtsbild im Werk Ammians*. HD 5. Bonn: Habelt.
- . 1989. "The Osmosis of Late Roman and Germanic Aristocracies". In Chrysos and Schwarcz, eds 1989: 75–86.
- Diesner, Hans-Joachim. 1973. *Isidor von Sevilla und seine Zeit*. Arbeiten zur Theologie 52. Stuttgart: Calwer.
- . 1977. *Isidor von Sevilla und das westgotische Spanien*. Abhandlungen der sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, philologisch-historische Klasse 67/3. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Drews, Wolfram. 2002. "Goten und Römer als Gegenstand der Historiographie bei Isidore von Seville". *Saeculum* 53: 1–20.
- Dronke, Peter. 1977. "Waltharius—Gaiferos". In Ursula and Peter Dronke, *Barbara et antiquissima carmina*: 27–79. Barcelona: Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona.
- . 1984. "Waltharius and the Vita Waltharii". *PBB* 106: 390–402.
- Duggan, Joseph J. 1986. "Medieval Epic as Popular Historiography: Appropriation of Historical Knowledge in the Vernacular Epic". In *La littérature historiographique des origines à 1500*, vol. 1, Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, Ursula Link-Heer and Peter-Michael Spangenberg, eds: 285–311. Grundriss der Romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters XI/1. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
- Dumville, David N. 1976. "The Anglian Collection of Royal Genealogies and Regnal Lists". *ASE* 5: 23–50.
- . 1977a. "Kingships, Genealogies and Regnal Lists". In *Early Medieval Kingship*, Peter H. Sawyer and Ian N. Wood, eds: 72–104. Leeds: University of Leeds.

- . 1977b. "Sub-Roman Britain: History and Legend". *History* 62: 173–92.
- . 1986. "The Historical Value of the *Historia Brittonum*". *Arthurian Literature* 6: 1–26.
- . 1994. "*Historia brittonum*: An Insular History from the Carolingian Age". In Scharer and Scheibelreiter, eds 1994: 406–34.
- Ebenbauer, Alfred. 1988. "Heldenlied und 'Historisches Lied' im Frühmittelalter—und davor". In Beck, ed. 1988: 15–34.
- Eggert, Wolfgang, and Barbara Pätzold. 1984. *Wir-Gefühl und Regnum Saxonicum bei frühmittelalterlichen Geschichtsschreibern*. Beihefte zum Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 21. Vienna: Hermann Böhlhaus Nachfolger.
- Erdkamp, Paul, ed. 2007. *A Companion to the Roman Army*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Erikson, Alvar. 1965. "The Problem of Authorship in the Chronicle of Fredegar". *Eranos* 63: 47–76.
- Everett, Nicholas. 2003. *Literacy in Lombard Italy, c. 568–774*. CSMLT 54. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2009. "Literacy from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages, c.300–800 AD". In *The Cambridge Handbook of Literacy*, David R. Olson and Nancy Torrance, eds: 362–85. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ewig, Eugen. 1983. *Die Merowinger und das Imperium*. RWAW G261, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.
- . 1998. "Trojamythos und fränkische Frühgeschichte". In Geuenich, ed. 1998: 1–30.
- . 2001. "Zum Geschichtsbild der Franken und den Anfängen der Merowinger". In *Mediaevalia Augiensia: Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters*, Jürgen Petersohn, ed.: 43–58. Vorträge und Forschungen 54. Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag.
- . 2006. *Die Merowinger und das Frankenreich*, 5th edn, updated by Ulrich Nonn. KUT 392, Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer.
- Fanning, Steven C. 1981. "Lombard Arianism Reconsidered". *Speculum* 56: 241–58.
- Favrod, Justin. 2002. *Les Burgondes: un royaume oublié au cœur de l'Europe*. Collection Le savoir suisse 4. Lausanne: Presses polytechniques et universitaires romandes.
- Fentress, James, and Chris Wickham. 1992. *Social Memory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Filotas, Bernadette. 2005. *Pagan Survivals, Superstitions and Popular Cultures in Early Medieval Pastoral Literature*. S&T 151. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies.
- Fischer, Andreas. 2014. "Reflecting Romanness in the Fredegar Chronicle". *EME* 22: 433–45.
- Fjalldal, Magnús. 1998. *The Long Arm of Coincidence: The Frustrated Connection between "Beowulf" and "Grettis Saga"*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Fleming, Robin. 2010. *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*. London: Allen Lane.

- Florio, Rubén. 2012. "Incoherencias del Waltharius: Reyes, Héroes y Antihéroes: La Leyenda y la Historia". *Viator* 43: 147–80.
- Fontaine, Jacques. 2000. *Isidore de Séville: genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Foot, Sarah. 1996. "The Making of Angelcynn: English Identity before the Norman Conquest". *TRHS* 6th Series 6: 25–49.
- Fouracre, Paul. 2014. Review of Wood 2013. *Reviews in History*: <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/1650>, accessed on 21 September 2014.
- Frank, Roberta. 1982. "The *Beowulf* Poet's Sense of History". In *The Wisdom of Poetry: Essays in Early English Literature in Honor of Morton W. Bloomfield*, Larry D. Benson and Siegfried Wenzel, eds: 53–65. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University.
- . 1991. "Germanic Legend in Old English literature". In Godden and Lapidge, eds 1991: 88–106.
- Freise, Eckhard. 1984. "Kalendarische und annalistische Grundformen der Memoria". In *Memoria: Der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter*, Karl Schmid and Joachim Wollasch, eds: 441–577. Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften 48. Munich, Wilhelm Fink Verlag.
- Fried, Johannes. 2013. *Karl der Große: Gewalt und Glaube: Eine Biographie*. Munich: C.H. Beck.
- Friesen, Bill. 2008. "Visions and Revisions: The Sources and Analogues of the Old English *Andreas*". Diss. Toronto.
- Friis-Jensen, Karsten, ed. 1981. *Saxo Grammaticus: A Medieval Author between Norse and Latin Culture*. Danish Medieval History and Saxo Grammaticus 2. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.
- . 1987. *Saxo Grammaticus as Latin Poet: Studies in the Verse Passages of the "Gesta Danorum"*. *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici, Supplementa* 14. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- . 1992. "Saxo Grammaticus's Study of the Roman Historiographers and His Version of History". In *Saxo Grammaticus tra storiografia e letteratura*, Carlo Santini, ed.: 61–81. *I conveni di classicororrena* 1. Bevagna: Il calamo.
- Fulk, R.D. 1992. *A History of Old English Meter*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- . 2002. "Myth in Historical Perspective: The Case of the Pagan Deities in Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies". In *Myth: A New Symposium*, Gregory Schrepp and William Hansen, eds: 225–39. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Fulk, R.D., and Christopher M. Cain. 2003. *A History of Old English Literature*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Fulk, R.D., Robert Bjork and John D. Niles. 2008. "Introduction"; and "Commentary". In *Klaeber's Beowulf: Fourth Edition*: xxiii–cxc; 110–272. *TOES* 21. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

- Gantner, Clemens. 2013. "The Label 'Greeks' in the Papal Diplomatic Repertoire in the Eighth Century". In Pohl and Heydemann, eds 2013b: 303–49.
- Garrison, Mary. 1994. "The Emergence of Carolingian Latin Literature and the Court of Charlemagne (780–814)". In McKitterick, ed. 1994: 111–40.
- . 2000. "The Franks as the New Israel? Education for an Identity from Pippin to Charlemagne". In Hen and Innes, eds 2000: 114–61.
- . 2005. "Quid Hiniildus cum Christo?" In O'Brien O'Keefe and Orchard, eds 2005, vol. 1: 237–59.
- Gatti, Paolo, and Antonella Degl'Innocenti, eds. 1995. *Dudone di San Quintino*. Labirinti 16. Trento: Università degli Studi di Trento.
- Geary, Patrick J. 1983. "Ethnic Identity as a Situational Construct in the Early Middle Ages". *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien* 113: 15–26.
- . 1988. *Before France and Germany: The Creation and Transformation of the Merovingian World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . 1999. "Barbarians and Ethnicity". In *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World*, Glen W. Bowersock, Peter Brown and Oleg Grabar, eds: 107–29. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press.
- . 2002. *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Georgianna, Linda. 1987. "King Hrethel's Sorrow and the Limits of Heroic Action in *Beowulf*". *Speculum* 62: 829–50.
- Gerberding, Richard A. 1987. *The Rise of the Carolingians and the Liber Historiae Francorum*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Geuenich, Dieter. 1983. "Die volkssprachige Überlieferung der Karolingerzeit aus der Sicht des Historikers". *DA* 39: 104–30.
- . 2000. "Ludwig 'der Deutsche' und die Entstehung des ostfränkischen Reiches". In Haubrichs et al., eds 2000: 313–29.
- . 2004. "Karl der Große, Ludwig 'der Deutsche' und die Entstehung eines 'deutschen' Gemeinschaftsbewußtseins". In *Zur Geschichte der Gleichung "germanisch-deutsch": Sprache und Namen, Geschichte und Institutionen*, Heinrich Beck, Dieter Geuenich, Heiko Steuer and Dietrich Hakelberg, eds: 185–97. ERGA 34. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- , ed. 1998. *Die Franken und die Alemannen bis zur "Schlacht bei Zülpich" (496–497)*. ERGA 19. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Ghosh, Shami. 2007. "On the Origins of Germanic Heroic Poetry: A Case Study of the Legend of the Burgundians". *PBB* 129: 220–52.
- . 2009. "The Barbarian Past in Early Medieval Historical Narrative". Diss. Toronto.
- . 2011. *Kings' Sagas and Norwegian History: Problems and Perspectives*. The Northern World 54. Leiden: Brill.
- Giardina, Andrea. 1998. "Le origini troiane dall'impero alla nazione". In *Morfologie sociali e culturali in Europa fra tarda antichità e alto medioevo*: 177–209. Sett. 45. Spoleto: Presso la sede del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo.

- Giese, Wolfgang. 2004. *Die Goten*. KUT 597. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer.
- Gillett, Andrew. 1998. "The Purposes of Cassiodorus' *Variae*". In Murray, ed. 1998: 37–50.
- . 2000. "Jordanes and Ablabius". *Latomus*: 479–500.
- . 2006. "Ethnogenesis: A Contested Model of Early Medieval Europe". *History Compass* 4: 241–60.
- . 2009. "The Mirror of Jordanes: Concepts of the Barbarian, Then and Now". In Rousseau, ed. 2009: 392–408.
- , ed. 2002. *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*. SEM 4. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Glück, J.J. 1964. "Reving and Monomachy as Battle-Preludes in Ancient Warfare". *Acta Classica* 7: 25–31.
- Godden, Malcolm. 2002. "The Anglo-Saxons and the Goths: Rewriting the Sack of Rome". *ASE* 31: 47–68.
- Godden, Malcolm, and Michael Lapidge, eds. 1991. *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Goetz, Hans-Werner. 1980a. *Die Geschichtstheologie des Orosius*. Impulse der Forschung 32. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- . 1980b. "Orosius und die Barbaren". *Historia* 29: 356–76.
- . 2000. "Vergangenheitswahrnehmung, Vergangenheitsgebrauch und Geschichtssymbolismus in der Geschichtsschreibung der Karolingerzeit". In *Ideologie e pratiche del reimpiego nell'alto medioevo*: 177–225. Sett. 46. Spoleto: Presso la sede del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo.
- . 2003a. "Gens, Kings and Kingdoms: the Franks". In Goetz, Jarnut and Pohl, eds 2003: 307–44.
- . 2003b. "Gens: Terminology and Perception of the 'Germanic' Peoples from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages". In Corradini, Diesenberger and Reimitz, eds 2003: 39–64.
- . 2004. "Die germanisch-romanische (Kultur-)Synthese in der Wahrnehmung der merowingischen Geschichtsschreibung". In Hägermann, Haubrichs and Jarnut, eds 2004: 547–70.
- . 2014. "Orosius und seine 'Sieben Geschichtsbücher gegen die Heiden': Geschichtstheologie oder Rhetorik?". *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 96: 187–98.
- Goetz, Hans-Werner, Jörg Jarnut and Walter Pohl, eds. 2003. *Regna and Gentes: The Relationship between Late Antique and Early Medieval Peoples and Kingdoms in the Transformation of the Roman World*. TRW 13. Leiden: Brill.
- Goffart, Walter. 1963. "The Fredegar Problem Reconsidered". *Speculum* 38: 206–41. [Reprinted in Goffart 1989: 319–54.]
- . 1980. *Barbarians and Romans, AD 418–584: The Techniques of Accommodation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- . 1982. "Foreigners in the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours". *Florilegium* 4: 80–99. [Reprinted in Goffart 1989: 275–91.]
- . 1986. "Paul the Deacon's *Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium* and the Early Design of Charlemagne's Succession". *Traditio* 42: 59–93.
- . 1987. "From *Historiae* to *Historia Francorum* and Back Again: Aspects of the Textual History of Gregory of Tours". In *Religion, Culture, and Society in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Honor of Richard E. Sullivan*, ed. Thomas F.X. Noble and John J. Contreni: 55–76. *Studies in Medieval Culture* 23. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University. [Reprinted in Goffart 1989: 255–74.]
- . 1988. *The Narrators of Barbarian History (AD 550–800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- . 1989. *Rome's Fall and After*. London: Hambledon Press.
- . 1995. "Two Notes on Germanic Antiquity Today". *Traditio* 50: 9–30.
- . 2002. "Conspicuously Absent: Martial Heroism in the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours and its Likes". In *The World of Gregory of Tours*, Kathleen Mitchell and Ian N. Wood, eds: 365–93. CBT 8. Leiden: Brill.
- . 2005. "Jordanes's *Getica* and the Disputed Authenticity of Gothic Origins from Scandinavia". *Speculum* 80: 379–98. [Reprinted in Goffart 2006: 56–72.]
- . 2006. *Barbarian Tides: The Migration Age and the Later Roman Empire*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- . 2010. "The Technique of Barbarian Settlement in the Fifth Century: A Personal, Streamlined Account with Ten Additional Comments". *JLA* 3: 65–98.
- Goltz, Andreas. 2008. *Barbar – König – Tyrann: Das Bild Theoderichs des Großen in der Überlieferung des 5. bis 9. Jahrhunderts*. Millennium-Studien 12. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Gottzmann, Carola L. 2000. "Schuld und Strafe im *Waltharius*". In *Als das wissend die meister wol: Beiträge zur Darstellung und Vermittlung von Wissen in Fachliteratur und Dichtung des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit: Walter Blank zum 65. Geburtstag*, Martin Ehrenfeuchter and Thomas Ehlen, eds: 29–50. Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang.
- . 2003. "Warum muss Hildebrand vor *Otachres nid* fliehen? Überlegungen zum 'Hildebrandslied'". *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 122: 1–19.
- Graus, František. 1975. *Lebendige Vergangenheit: Überlieferung im Mittelalter und in den Vorstellungen vom Mittelalter*. Cologne: Böhlau.
- Greatrex, Geoffrey. 2000. "Roman Identity in the Sixth Century". In Mitchell and Greatrex, eds 2000: 267–92.
- Green, D.H. 1998. *Language and History in the Early Germanic World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2009. "Linguistic and Literary Traces of the Langobards". In Ausenda, Delogu and Wickham, eds 2009: 174–86.

- Greenfield, Stanley B. 1985. "Beowulf and the Judgement of the Righteous". In *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss, eds: 393–407. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Greenfield, Stanley B., and Daniel G. Calder. 1986. *A New Critical History of Old English Literature*. New York: New York University Press.
- Grey, Cam. 2011. "The *ius colonatus* as a Model for the Settlement of Barbarian Prisoners-of-War in the Late Roman Empire?". In Mathisen and Shanzer, eds 2011: 147–60.
- Griffith, Mark S. 1995. "Some Difficulties in *Beowulf*, Lines 874–902: Sigemund Reconsidered". *ASE* 24: 11–41.
- Gruen, Erich S. 2011. *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Gschwantler, Otto. 1975. "Versöhnung als Thema einer heroischen Sage (Die Alboin-Thurisd-Sage und eine archaische Form der Buße: an. *vera i sonar stad*)". *PBB* 97: 230–62.
- . 1976. "Die Heldensage von Alboin und Rosimund". In *Festgabe für Otto Höfler zum 75. Geburtstag*: 214–47. *Philologica Germanica* 3. Vienna: Böhlau.
- . 1979. "Formen langobardischer mündlicher Überlieferung". *Jahrbuch für internationale Germanistik* 11: 58–85.
- Hadley, Dawn M. 2006. *The Vikings in England: Settlement, Society and Culture*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Haefele, Hans F. 1998. "Geraldus-Lektüre". *DA* 54: 1–22.
- Haferland, Harald. 2002. "Mündliche Erzähltechnik im *Heliand*". *Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift* 52: 237–59.
- . 2006. "Vermündlichte Schriftlichkeit und verschriftlichte Mündlichkeit: Zur Funktion und Entstehung von Hakenstil und Variation in der Stabreimdichtung am Beispiel des 'Heliand'". *Niederdeutsches Jahrbuch* 129: 7–41.
- Hägermann, Dieter, Wolfgang Haubrichs and Jörg Jarnut, eds. 2004. *Akkulturation: Probleme einer germanisch-romanischen Kultursynthese in Spätantike und frühem Mittelalter*. ERGA 41. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Halsall, Guy. 2003. *Warfare and Society in the Barbarian West, 450–900*. London: Routledge.
- . 2007. *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376–568*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2010. "The Technique of Barbarian Settlement in the Fifth Century: A Reply to Walter Goffart". *JLA* 3: 99–112.
- . 2011. "Ethnicity and Early Medieval Cemeteries". *Arqueología y Territorio Medieval* 18: 15–27.
- . 2012. "Northern Britain and the Fall of the Roman Empire". *Mediaeval Journal* 2: 1–25.
- . 2014. "Two Worlds Become One: A 'Counter-Intuitive' View of the Roman Empire and 'Germanic' Migration". *German History* 32: 515–32.

- Hammer, Carl I. 2005. "Recycling Rome and Ravenna: Two Studies in Early-Medieval Reuse". *Saeculum* 56: 295–325.
- Harries, Jill. 2001. "Not the Theodosian Code: Euric's Law and Late Fifth-Century Gaul". In Mathisen and Shanzer, eds 2001: 39–51.
- Harris, Joseph. 1979. "The *Senna*: From Description to Literary Theory". *Michigan Germanic Studies* 5: 65–74.
- . 1985. "Die altenglische Heldendichtung". In *Neues Handbuch der Literaturwissenschaft*, vol. 6: *Europäisches Frühmittelalter*, Klaus von See, ed.: 236–76. Wiesbaden: AULA-Verlag.
- . 1986. "Saga as Historical Novel". In *Structure and Meaning in Old Norse Literature: New Approaches to Textual Analysis and Literary Criticism*, John Lindow, Lars Lönnroth and Gerd Wolfgang Weber, eds: 187–219. Odense: Odense University Press.
- . 1987. "Deor and Its Refrain: Preliminaries to an Interpretation". *Traditio* 43: 23–53.
- . 1988. "Hadubrand's Lament: On the Origin and Age of Elegy in Germanic". In Beck, ed. 1988: 81–114.
- . 1992. "Beowulf's Last Words". *Speculum* 67: 1–32.
- . 2000. "Beowulf as Epic". *Oral Tradition* 15: 159–69.
- . 2012. "Older Germanic Poetry, with a Note on the Icelandic Sagas". In Reichl, ed. 2012: 253–78.
- Haubrichs, Wolfgang. 1989. "'Veterum regum actus et bella': Zur sog. Heldenliedersammlung Karls des Großen". In *Aspekte der Germanistik: Festschrift für Hans-Friedrich Rosenfeld zum 90. Geburtstag*, ed. Walter Tauber: 17–46. Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik 521. Göppingen: Kümmerle.
- . 1995. *Die Anfänge: Versuche volkssprachlicher Schriftlichkeit im frühen Mittelalter*, 2nd edn. Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn der Neuzeit I/1. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- . 2000. "Ein Held für viele Zwecke: Dietrich von Bern und sein Widerpart in den Heldensagenzeugnissen des frühen Mittelalters". In Haubrichs et al., eds 2000: 330–63.
- . 2002. "'Heroische Zeiten?' Wanderungen von Heldenamen und Heldensagen zwischen den germanischen *gentes* des frühen Mittelalters". In *Circolazione di uomini, di idee e di testi nel Medioevo germanico*, ed. Franco de Vivo: 77–99. Cassino: Edizioni dell'Università degli Studi di Cassino.
- . 2009. "Langobardic Personal Names: Given Names and Name-Giving among the Lombards". In Ausenda, Delogu, and Wickham, eds 2009: 195–236.
- . 2011. "Ethnizität zwischen Differenz und Identität: Sprache als Instrument der Kommunikation und der Gruppenbildung im frühen Mittelalter". *Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik* 41: 10–38.

- Haubrichs, Wolfgang, Ernst Hellgardt, Reiner Hildebrandt, Stephan Müller and Klaus Ridder, eds. 2000. *Theodisca: Beiträge zur althochdeutschen und altniederdeutschen Sprache und Literatur in der Kultur des frühen Mittelalters*. ERGA 22. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Haug, Walter. 1975. "Andreas Heuslers Heldensagenmodell: Prämissen, Kritik und Gegenentwurf". *ZfdA* 104: 273–92.
- . 1994. "Die Grausamkeit der Heldensage: Neue gattungstheoretische Überlegungen zur heroischen Dichtung". In *Studien zum Altgermanischen: Festschrift für Heinrich Beck*, ed. Heiko Uecker: 302–26. ERGA 11. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Heather, Peter. 1991. *Goths and Romans*, 332–489. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . 1994. "Literacy and Power in the Migration Period". In *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf, eds: 177–97. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1995. "Theoderic, King of the Goths". *EME* 4: 145–73.
- . 1996. *The Goths*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- . 2007. "Merely an Ideology? Gothic Identity in Ostrogothic Italy". In *The Ostrogoths from the Migration Period to the Sixth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, Sam J. Barnish and Federico Marazzi, eds: 31–60. SHA 7. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.
- . 2009. *Empires and Barbarians: The Fall of Rome and the Birth of Europe*. London: Macmillan.
- . 2013. *The Restoration of Rome: Barbarian Peoples and Imperial Pretenders*. London: Macmillan.
- Heinzelmann, Martin. 1988. "Bischof und Herrschaft vom spätantiken Gallien bis zu den karolingischen Hausmeiern: Die institutionellen Grundlagen". In Prinz, ed. 1988: 23–82.
- . 1994a. "Die Franken und die fränkische Geschichte in der Perspektive der Historiographie Gregors von Tours". In Scharer and Scheibelreiter, eds 1994: 326–44.
- . 1994b. *Gregor von Tours (538–594): "Zehn Bücher Geschichte": Historiographie und Gesellschaftskonzept im 6. Jahrhundert*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Heinze, Joachim. 1999. *Einführung in die mittelhochdeutsche Dietrichepik*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Hellgardt, Ernst. 1996. "Zur Mehrsprachigkeit im Karolingerreich: Bemerkungen aus Anlaß von Rosamond McKittericks Buch *The Carolingians and the Written Word*". *PBB* 118: 1–48.
- Hen, Yitzhak. 1995. *Culture and Religion in Merovingian Gaul AD 481–751*. CBT 1. Leiden: Brill.

- . 2007. *Roman Barbarians: The Royal Court and Culture in the Early Medieval West*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Hen, Yitzhak, and Matthew Innes, eds. 2000. *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Herren, Michael. 1992. "Walahfrid Strabo's *De Imagine Tetrici*: An Interpretation". In *Latin Culture and Medieval Germanic Europe*, Richard North and Tette Hofstra, eds: 25–41. GL 1. Groningen: Egbert Forsten.
- Heusler, Andreas. 1905. *Lied und Epos in germanischer Sagendichtung*. Dortmund: Ruhfus.
- . 1909. "Geschichtliches und Mythisches in der germanischen Heldensage". *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philologisch-historische Klasse* 1909: 920–45. [Reprinted in Heusler 1969, vol. 2: 495–517.]
- . 1943. *Die altgermanische Dichtung*. 2nd edn. Potsdam: Athenaion.
- . 1969. *Kleine Schriften*. 2 vols. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Higham, N.J. 1994. *The English Conquest: Gildas and Britain in the Fifth Century*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- . 2006. *(Re-)Reading Bede: The "Historia Ecclesiastica" in English History*. New York/London: Routledge.
- Hight, Gilbert. 1972. *The Speeches in Vergil's "Aeneid"*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hill, Joyce. 1994 [orig. 1984]. "Widsið and the Tenth Century". In *Old English Shorter Poems: Basic Readings*, Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe, ed.: 319–33. New York: Garland.
- Hill, Thomas D. 1982. "The Confession of Beowulf and the Structure of *Völsunga saga*". In *The Vikings*, Robert T. Farrell, ed.: 165–79. London: Phillimore.
- . 1988. "The Variegated Obit as an Historiographical Motif in Old English Poetry and Anglo-Latin Historical Literature". *Traditio* 44: 101–24.
- . 2007. "Beowulf's Roman Rites: Roman Ritual and Germanic Tradition". *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 106: 325–35.
- Hillgarth, J.N. 1966. "Coins and Chronicles: Propaganda in Sixth-Century Spain and the Byzantine Background". *Historia* 15: 483–508. [Reprinted with the same pagination in Hillgarth 1985, with an Additional Note.]
- . 1970. "Historiography in Visigothic Spain". In *La storiografia altomedievale*: 261–352. Sett. 17. Spoleto: Presso la sede del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo. [Reprinted with the same pagination in Hillgarth 1985.]
- . 1985. *Visigothic Spain, Byzantium and the Irish*. Variorum Collected Studies Series CS 216. London: Variorum.
- . 1992. "The *Historiae* of Orosius in the Early Middle Ages". In *De Tertullien aux Mozarabes: mélanges offerts à Jacques Fontaines*, Louis Holtz, Jean-Claude Fredouille and Marie-Hélène Jullien, eds: 157–70. CEA MÂ 26. Paris: Institut d'études augustiniennes.

- . 2009. *The Visigoths in History and Legend*. S&T 166. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. 1972. "The Social Function of the Past: Some Questions". *P&P* 55 (1972): 3–17.
- . 1983. "Introduction: Inventing Traditions". In *The Invention of Tradition*, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds: 1–14. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- van Houts, Elisabeth. 1999. *Memory and Gender in Medieval Europe, 900–1200*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Howe, Nicholas. 2004. "Rome: Capital of Anglo-Saxon England". *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 34: 147–72.
- Hunter, Michael. 1974. "Germanic and Roman Antiquity and the Sense of the Past in Anglo-Saxon England". *ASE* 3: 29–50.
- Hunter Blair, Peter. 2003. *An Introduction to Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edn, updated by Simon Keynes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Inglebert, Hervé. 1996. *Les Romains chrétiens face à l'histoire de Rome: histoire, christianisme et romanités en Occident dans l'Antiquité tardive (IIIe–Ve siècles)*. CÉA SA 145. Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes.
- . 2001. *Interpretatio christiana: Les mutations des savoirs, cosmographie, géographie, ethnographie, histoire, dans l'antiquité chrétienne, 30–630 après J.-C.* CÉA SA 166. Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes.
- Innes, Matthew. 1997. "The Classical Tradition in the Carolingian Renaissance: Ninth-Century Encounters with Suetonius". *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 3: 262–82.
- . 1998. "Memory, Orality and Literacy in an Early Medieval Society". *P&P* 158: 3–36.
- . 2000. "Teutons or Trojans? The Carolingians and the Germanic Past". In Hen and Innes, eds 2000: 227–49.
- Irving, Edward R., Jr. 1997. "Christian and Pagan Elements". In Bjork and Niles, eds 1997: 175–92.
- Isaac, Benjamin. 2004. *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Jacobsen, Peter Christian. 2002. "Gesta Berengarii und Waltharius-Epos". *DA* 58: 205–11.
- James, Edward. 1988. *The Franks*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- . 1998. "Gregory of Tours and the Franks". In Murray, ed. 1998: 51–66.
- . 2009. *Europe's Barbarians AD 200–600*. Harlow: Pearson Longman.
- Jarnut, Jörg. 1982. *Die Langobarden*. KUT 339. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer.
- Johnson, Scott Fitzgerald, ed. 2012. *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jones, A.H.M. 1964. *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey*. 2 vols. Oxford: Blackwell.

- Kaiser, Reinhold. 1988. "Königtum und Bischofsherrschaft im frühmittelalterlichen Neustrien". In Prinz, ed. 1988: 83–108.
- . 2004a. *Die Burgunder*. KUT 586. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer.
- . 2004b. *Das römische Erbe und das Merowingerreich*, 3rd edn. Enzyklopädie deutscher Geschichte 26. Munich: Oldenbourg.
- Kakridi, Christina. 2005. *Cassiodors "Variae": Literatur und Politik im ostgotischen Italien*. Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 223. Munich: K.G. Saur.
- Kaldellis, Anthony. 2004. *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Kartschoke, Dieter. 2000. *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im frühen Mittelalter*, 3rd edn. Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im Mittelalter 1. Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag.
- Kaske, Robert Earl. 1963 [orig. 1958]. "Sapientia et fortitudo as the Controlling Theme of *Beowulf*". In *An Anthology of "Beowulf" Criticism*, Lewis E. Nicholson, ed.: 269–310. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Kaster, Robert E. 2014. "The Transmission of Suetonius's *Caesars* in the Middle Ages". *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 144: 133–86.
- Katscher, Rosemarie. 1973. "Waltharius – Dichtung und Dichter". *Mlat Jb* 9: 48–120.
- Kelly, Gavin. 2008. *Ammianus Marcellinus: The Allusive Historian*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kersken, Norbert. 1995. *Geschichtsschreibung im Europa der nationes: Nationalgeschichtliche Gesamtdarstellungen im Mittelalter*. Münstersche historische Forschungen 8. Cologne: Böhlau.
- Klaeber, Friedrich. 1911–12. "Die christlichen Elemente im *Beowulf*". *Anglia* 35: 111–36; 249–70; 453–83; *Anglia* 36: 169–99.
- Kloocke, Kurt. 1972. *Joseph Bédiers Theorie über den Ursprung der Chansons de geste und die daran anschließende Diskussion zwischen 1908 und 1968*. 2 vols. Göppinger Akademische Beiträge 33/4. Göppingen: Kümmerle.
- Koch, Manuel. 2012. *Ethnische Identität im Entstehungsprozess des spanischen Westgotenreiches*. ERGA 75. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Kragl, Florian. 2007. "Mythisierung – Heroisierung – Literarisierung: Vier Kapitel zu Theoderich dem Großen und Dietrich von Bern". *PBB* 129: 66–102.
- Kratz, Dennis M. 1977. "Quid Waltharius Ruodliebque cum Christo?". In *The Epic in Medieval Society: Aesthetic and Moral Values*, Harald Scholler, ed.: 126–49. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- . 1980. *Mocking Epic: "Waltharius", "Alexandreis", and the Problem of Christian Heroism*. Madrid: José Porrúa Turanzas, S.A.
- Krautschick, Stefan. 1983. *Cassiodor und die Politik seiner Zeit*. HD 17. Bonn: Habelt.
- . 1989. "Die Familie der Könige in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter". In Chrysos and Schwarcz, eds 1989: 109–42.

- Kretschmer, Marek Thue. 2007. *Rewriting Roman History in the Middle Ages: The "Historia Romana" and the Manuscript Bamberg, Hist 3*. MST 36. Leiden: Brill.
- Krutzler, Gerald. 2013. "Die Wahrnehmung der nichtfränkischen Völker in der merowing-erzeitlichen Historiographie". In Pohl and Heydemann, eds 2013a: 487–547.
- Kuhn, Hans. 1961. "Heldensage vor und außerhalb der Dichtung". In *Zur germanisch-deutschen Heldensage: Sechzehn Aufsätze zum neuen Forschungsstand*, Karl Hauck, ed.: 173–94. Wege der Forschung 14. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Kulikowski, Michael. 2001. "The Visigothic Settlement in Aquitania: The Imperial Perspective". In Mathisen and Shanzer, eds 2001: 25–38.
- . 2007. *Rome's Gothic Wars from the Third Century to Alaric*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2012. "The Western Kingdoms". In Johnson, ed. 2012: 31–59.
- Ladner, Gerhart B. 1976. "On Roman Attitudes towards Barbarians in Late Antiquity". *Viator* 7: 1–26.
- Lafferty, Sean. 2013. *Law and Society in the Age of Theoderic the Great: A Study of the Edictum Theoderici*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Langosch, Karl. 1983. "Zum Waltharius Ekkeharts I. von St. Gallen". *MlatJb* 18: 84–99.
- Lapidge, Michael. 1986. "The Anglo-Latin Background". In Greenfield and Calder, eds 1986: 5–37.
- . 2000. "The Archetype of Beowulf". *ASE* 29: 5–41.
- . 2006. *The Anglo-Saxon Library*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . 2007. Review of North 2006. *Reviews in History*: <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/617>, accessed on 22 March 2009.
- Lapidge, Michael, and David Dumville, eds. 1984. *Gildas: New Approaches*. Studies in Celtic History 5. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.
- Lenski, Noel. 2011. "Captivity and Romano-Barbarian Interchange". In Mathisen and Shanzer, eds 2011: 185–98.
- Levison, Wilhelm. 1946. *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Leyerle, John. 1965. "Beowulf the Hero and the King". *Medium Aevum* 34: 89–102.
- Liebeschuetz, J.H.W.G. 2007. "Warlords and Landlords". In Erdkamp, ed. 2007: 679–94.
- . 2011a. "Making a Gothic History: Does the *Getica* of Jordanes Preserve Genuinely Gothic Traditions?". *JLA* 4: 186–216.
- . 2011b. "Why Did Jordanes Write the *Getica*". *Antiquité Tardive* 19: 295–302.
- Lienert, Elisabeth. 2010. *Die 'historische' Dietrichepik: Untersuchungen zu "Dietrichs Flucht", "Rabenschlacht" und "Alpharts Tod"*. TUMH 5. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Lönnroth, Lars. 1969. "The Noble Heathen: A Theme in the Sagas". *Scandinavian Studies* 41: 1–29.
- Löwe, Heinz. 1952. "Von Theoderich dem Großen zu Karl dem Großen: Das Werden des Abendlandes im Geschichtsbild des frühen Mittelalters". *DA* 9: 353–401.

- Luhr, Rosemarie. 1982. *Studien zur Sprache des Hildebrandsliedes*. Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe I: Deutsche Sprache und Literatur 568. Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang.
- Lutz, Angelika. 2000. "Æthelweard's *Chronicon* and Old English Poetry". *ASE* 29: 177–214.
- Maas, Michael. 2012. "Barbarians: Problems and Approaches". In Johnson, ed. 2012: 60–91.
- McDonald, William C. 1984. "'Too Softly a Gift of Treasure': A Rereading of the Old High German *Hildebrandslied*". *Euphorion* 78: 1–16.
- MacGeorge, Penny. 2002. *Late Roman Warlords*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Magennis, Hugh. 1999. *Anglo-Saxon Appetites: Food and Drink and their Consumption in Old English and Related Literature*. Dublin: Four Courts Press.
- Malkin, Irad. 1998. *The Returns of Odysseus: Colonization and Ethnicity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Marasco, Gabriele, ed. 2003. *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity, Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.* Leiden: Brill.
- Markus, Robert. 1986. "Chronicle and Theology: Prosper of Aquitaine". In *The Inheritance of Historiography, 350–900*, C. Holdsworth and T.P. Wiseman, eds: 31–43. Exeter Studies in History 12. Exeter: University of Exeter.
- Marold, Edith. 1985. "Dietrich als Sinnbild der Superbia". In *Arbeiten zur Skandinavistik: 6. Arbeitstagung der Skandinavisten des Deutschen Sprachgebietes*, Heinrich Beck, ed.: 443–86. Texte und Untersuchungen zur Germanistik und Skandinavistik 11. Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang.
- . 1988. "Wandel und Konstanz in der Darstellung der Figur des Dietrich von Bern". In Beck, ed. 1988: 149–82.
- Martínez Pizarro, Joaquín. 1989. *A Rhetoric of the Scene: Dramatic Narrative in the Early Middle Ages*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- . 2003. "Ethnic and National History ca. 500–1000". In Deliyannis, ed. 2003: 43–87.
- . 2006. "Mixed Modes in Historical Narrative". In *Narrative and History in the Early Medieval West*, Elizabeth M. Tyler and Ross Balzaretti, eds: 91–104. SEM 16. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Maskarinec, Maya. 2013. "Who Were the Romans? Shifting Scripts of Romanness in Early Medieval Italy". In Pohl and Heydemann, eds 2013a: 297–363.
- Mathisen, Ralph W. 1997. "Barbarian Bishops and the Churches 'in Barbaricis Gentibus' during Late Antiquity". *Speculum* 72: 664–97.
- . 2006. "Peregrini, Barbari, and Cives Romani: Concepts of Citizenship and the Legal Identity of Barbarians in the Later Roman Empire". *American Historical Review* 111: 1011–40.
- . 2011. "Catalogues of Barbarians in Late Antiquity". In Mathisen and Shanzer, eds 2011: 17–32.

- . 2012. "Concepts of Citizenship". In Johnson, ed. 2012: 744–63.
- Mathisen, Ralph W., and Danuta Shanzer. 2011. "Introduction". In Mathisen and Shanzer, eds 2011: 1–11.
- Mathisen, Ralph W., and Hagith Sivan. 1999. "Forging a New Identity: the Visigothic Kingdom of Toulouse". In *The Visigoths: Culture and Society*, Alberto Ferreiro, ed.: 1–62. The Medieval Mediterranean 20. Leiden: Brill.
- Mathisen, Ralph W., and Danuta Shanzer, eds. 2001. *Society and Culture in Late Antique Gaul: Revisiting the Sources*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- . 2011. *Romans, Barbarians and the Transformation of the Roman World: Cultural Interaction and the Creation of Identity in Late Antiquity*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Matthews, John. 1989. *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- McKinnell, John. 1990. "The Context of *Vǫlundarqviða*". *Saga-Book of the Viking Society* 23: 1–27.
- McKitterick, Rosamond. 1983. *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751–987*. London: Longman.
- . 1989. *The Carolingians and the Written Word*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2004a. "Akkulturation and the Writing of History in the Early Middle Ages". In Hägermann, Haubrichs and Jarnut, eds 2004: 381–95.
- . 2004b. *History and Memory in the Carolingian World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2006. *Perceptions of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- . 2008. *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2014. "The Pleasures of the Past: History and Identity in the Early Middle Ages". *EME* 22: 387–508.
- , ed. 1994. *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McLintock, David R. 1974. "The Politics of the *Hildebrandslied*". *New German Studies* 2: 61–81.
- Meaney, Audrey L. 1989. "Scyld Scefing and the Dating of *Beowulf*—Again". *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 71: 7–40.
- Merrills, Andrew. 2005. *History and Geography in Late Antiquity*. CSMLT 64. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2006. "Comparative Histories: The Vandals, the Sueves, and Isidore of Seville". In Corradini et al., eds 2006: 35–45.
- Meyer, Richard M. 1889. *Die altgermanische Poesie nach ihren formelhaften elementen beschrieben*. Berlin: Hertz.

- Mitchell, Stephen, and Geoffrey Greatrex, eds. 2000. *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity*. London: Duckworth.
- Moisl, Hermann. 1985. "Kingship and Orally Transmitted 'Stammes-tradition' among the Lombards and Franks". In *Die Bayern und ihre Nachbarn, Teil 1*, Herwig Wolfram and Andreas Schwarcz, eds: 111–19. VKF 8. Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Momigliano, Arnaldo. 1958. "Some Observations on the *Origo gentis Romanae*". *Journal of Roman Studies* 48: 56–73.
- . 1963. "Pagan and Christian Historiography in the Fourth Century A.D.". In *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, Arnaldo Momigliano, ed.: 79–99. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- . 1966. "Cassiodorus and the Italian Culture of his Time". In *Studies in Historiography*, Arnaldo Momigliano, ed.: 181–210. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
- Mommsen, Theodor. 1882. "Prooemium". In *Iordanis Romana et Getica*: v–lxxii. MGH AA 5/1. Hanover: Hahn.
- Moorhead, John. 1992. *Theoderic in Italy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mortensen, Lars Boje. 1991. *Civiliserede barbarer: historikerne Paulus Diaconus og hans forgængere*. Studier fra Sprog og Oldtidsforskning 315. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanums Forlag.
- . 1995. "Stylistic Choice in a Reborn Genre: The National Histories of Widukind of Corvey and Dudo of St. Quentin". In Gatti and Degl'Innocenti, eds 1995: 77–102.
- Mostert, Marco. 2006. "Remembering the Barbarian Past: Oral Traditions about the Distant Past in the Middle Ages". In *The Medieval Chronicle IV*, Erik Kooper, ed.: 113–125. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Muhlberger, Steven. 1990. *The Fifth-Century Chroniclers: Prosper, Hydatius, and the Gallic Chronicler of 452*. ARCA 27. Leeds: Francis Cairns.
- . 1998. "War, Warlords and Christian Historians from the Fifth to the Seventh Century". In Murray, ed. 1998: 83–98.
- Murdoch, Brian O. 1996. *The Germanic Hero: Politics and Pragmatism in Early Medieval Poetry*. London: Hambledon Press.
- Murray, Alexander Callander. 1998. "Post vocantur merohingii: Fredegar, Merovech, and 'Sacral Kingship'". In Murray, ed. 1998: 121–52.
- . 2002. "Reinhard Wenskus on 'Ethnogenesis', Ethnicity, and the Origin of the Franks". In Gillett, ed. 2002: 39–68.
- . 2008. "Chronology and the Composition of the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours". *JLA* 1: 157–96.
- , ed. 1998b. *After Rome's Fall: Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Neidorf, Leonard. 2012. "Beowulf before *Beowulf*: Anglo-Saxon Anthroponymy and Heroic Legend". *Review of English Studies* 64: 553–73.

- . 2013a. "The Dating of *Widsið* and the Study of Germanic Antiquity". *Neophilologus* 97: 165–83.
- . 2013b. "Scribal Errors of Proper Names in the *Beowulf* Manuscript". *ASE* 42: 249–69.
- , ed. 2014. *The Dating of Beowulf: A Reassessment*. Anglo-Saxon Studies 24. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer.
- Neidorf, Leonard, and Rafael J. Pascual. 2014. "The Language of *Beowulf* and the Conditioning of Kaluza's Law". *Neophilologus* 98: 657–73.
- Nelson, Janet L. 1996 [orig. 1991]. "Gender and Genre in Women Historians of the Early Middle Ages". In Janet L. Nelson, *The Frankish World, 750–900*: 183–97. London: Hambledon Press.
- . 2003. "England and the Continent in the Ninth Century, II: Vikings and Others". *TRHS* 6th Series 13: 1–28.
- . 2005. "England and the Continent in the Ninth Century, IV: Bodies and Minds". *TRHS* 6th Series 15: 1–24.
- Neville, Jennifer. 2001. "History, Poetry, and 'National' Identity in Anglo-Saxon England and the Carolingian Empire". In Olsen, Harbus and Hofstra, eds 2001: 107–26.
- Niles, John D. 2007 [orig. 1999]. "*Widsið* and the Anthropology of the Past". In John D. Niles, *Old English Heroic Poems and the Social Life of Texts*: 73–118. SEM 20. Turnhout: Brepols.
- North, Richard. 1994. "King Æthelwulf and the Goths in *Deor*". *AB&G* 40: 7–20.
- . 2006. *The Origins of "Beowulf": From Vergil to Wiglaf*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- van Nuffelen, Peter. 2012. *Orosius and the Rhetoric of History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Oakley, S.P. 1985. "Single Combat in the Roman Republic". *Classical Quarterly* 35: 395–410.
- O'Brien O'Keefe, Katherine, and Andy Orchard, eds. 2005. *Latin Learning and English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge*. 2 vols. TOES 14. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- O'Donnell, James J. 1982. "The Aims of Jordanes". *Historia* 31: 223–40.
- Oexle, Otto Gerhard. 1976. "Memoria und Memorialüberlieferung im früheren Mittelalter". *FMSt* 10: 70–96.
- Ohlenroth, Derk. 2005. "Zum Verhältnis von *Hildebrandslied* und Exilsage". *PBB* 126: 377–413.
- Olsen, Alexandra Hennessy. 1993. "Formulaic Tradition and the Latin *Waltharius*". In *Heroic Poetry in the Anglo-Saxon Period: Studies in Honor of Jess B. Bessinger, Jr.*, Helen Damico and John Leyerle, eds: 265–82. Studies in Medieval Culture 32. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University.
- Olsen, Karen E., Antonia Harbus, and Tette Hofstra, eds. 2001. *Germanic Texts and Latin Models: Medieval Reconstructions*. GL 4. Leuven: Peeters.

- Önnerfors, Alf. 1979. *Die Verfasserschaft des Waltharius-Epos aus sprachlicher Sicht*. RWA G236. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.
- . 1988. *Das Waltharius-Epos: Probleme und Hypothesen*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.
- . 1998a. "Bemerkungen zum Waltharius-Epos". In Önnerfors 1998c: 86–104.
- . 1998b. "Bemerkungen zum Waltharius-Epos (II)". In Önnerfors 1998c: 105–46.
- . 1998c. *Classica et mediaevalia: Kleine Schriften zur lateinischen Sprache und Literatur der Antike und des Mittelalters*. Spolia Berolinensia 10. Hildesheim: Weidmannsche Verlagsbuchhandlung.
- Orchard, Andy. 1994. *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*. Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 8. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1995. *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the "Beowulf" Manuscript*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. [Cited from the corrected reprint of 2003.]
- . 1997. *Cassell's Dictionary of Norse Myth and Legend*. London: Cassell.
- . 2003a. *A Critical Companion to "Beowulf"*. Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer.
- . 2003b. "Latin and the Vernacular Languages: The Creation of a Bilingual Textual Culture". In Charles-Edwards, ed. 2003: 191–219.
- Owen-Crocker, Gale R. 2000. *The Four Funerals in "Beowulf"*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- . 2007. Review of North 2006. *Review of English Studies* 59: 134–5.
- Page, R.I. 1987. "A Most Vile People": *Early English Historians on the Vikings*. Dorothea Coke Memorial Lecture in Northern Studies 1986. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- Parkes, Ford B. 1974. "Irony in Waltharius". *Modern Language Notes* 89: 459–65.
- Parks, Ward. 1986. "Flyting and Fighting: Pathways in the Realization of the Epic Contest". *Neophilologus* 70: 292–306.
- . 1990. *Verbal Dueling in Heroic Narrative: The Homeric and Old English Traditions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Partner, Nancy. 1977. *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Paschoud, François. 1975. *Cinq études sur Zosime*. Paris: Les Belles lettres.
- . 2006. *Eunape, Olympiodore, Zosime: Scripta minora*. Studi storici sulla Tarda Antichità 24. Bari: Edipuglia.
- Peeters, Joachim. 1991. "Guntharius – die Fehler eines Königs". *ABäG* 34: 33–48.
- Picard, Eve. 1991. *Germanisches Sakralkönigtum? Quellenkritische Studien zur Germania des Tacitus und zur altnordischen Überlieferung*. Skandinavistische Arbeiten 12. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
- Plassmann, Alheydis. 2006. *Origo gentis: Identitäts- und Legitimitätsstiftung in früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Herkunftserzählungen*. Orbis mediaevalis 7. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

- Pohl, Walter. 1991. "Conceptions of Ethnicity in Early Medieval Studies". *Archaeologia Polona* 29: 39–49. [Reprinted in Lester R. Little and Barbara Rosenwein, eds. 1998. *Debating the Middle Ages: Issues and Readings*: 15–24. Oxford: Blackwell.]
- . 1994a. "Paulus Diaconus und die 'Historia Langobardorum': Text und Tradition". In Scharer and Scheibelreiter, eds 1994: 375–405.
- . 1994b. "Tradition, Ethnogenese und literarische Gestaltung: eine Zwischenbilanz". In *Ethnogenese und Überlieferung: Angewandte Methoden der Frühmittelalterforschung*, Karl Brunner and Brigitte Merta, eds: 9–26. VIÖG 31. Vienna: Oldenbourg.
- . 1997. "The Empire and the Lombards: Treaties and Negotiations in the Sixth Century". In *Kingdoms of Empire: The Integration of Barbarians in Late Antiquity*, Walter Pohl, ed.: 75–133. TRW 1. Leiden: Brill.
- . 1998a. "Introduction: Strategies of Distinction". In Pohl and Reimitz, eds 1998: 1–15.
- . 1998b. "Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity". In Pohl and Reimitz, eds 1998: 17–69.
- . 1999. "Social Languages, Identities, and the Control of Discourse". In *East and West: Modes of Communication*, Evangelos Chrysos and Ian N. Wood, eds: 127–41. TRW 5. Leiden: Brill.
- . 2000a. "Deliberate Ambiguity: The Lombards and Christianity". In *Christianizing Peoples and Converting Individuals*, Guyda Armstrong and Ian N. Wood, eds: 47–58. International Medieval Research 7. Turnhout: Brepols.
- . 2000b. "Memory, Identity and Power in Lombard Italy". In Hen and Innes, eds 2000: 9–28.
- . 2001. "*per hospites divisi*: Wirtschaftliche Grundlagen der langobardischen Ansiedlung in Italien". *Römische historische Mitteilungen* 43: 179–226.
- . 2002. "Ethnicity, Theory, and Tradition: Response". In Gillett, ed. 2002: 221–39.
- . 2013. "Introduction—Strategies of Identification: A Methodological Profile". In Pohl and Heydemann, eds 2013b: 1–64.
- . 2014. "Romanness: A Multiple Identity and Its Changes". *EME* 22: 406–18.
- Pohl, Walter, Clemens Gantner and Richard Payne, eds. 2012. *Visions of Community in the Post-Roman World: The West, Byzantium and the Islamic World, 300–1100*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Pohl, Walter, and Gerda Heydemann, eds. 2013a. *Post-Roman Transitions: Christian and Barbarian Identities in the Early Medieval West*. CELAMA 14. Turnhout: Brepols.
- . 2013b. *Strategies of Identification: Ethnicity and Religion in Early Medieval Europe*. CELAMA 13. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Pohl, Walter, and Helmut Reimitz, eds. 1998. *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities, 300–800*. TRW 2. Leiden: Brill.
- Powell, Alison. 2002. "Verbal Parallels in *Andreas* and its Relationship to *Beowulf* and *Cynewulf*". Diss. Cambridge.

- Priester, Karin. 2004. *Geschichte der Langobarden: Gesellschaft – Kultur – Alltagsleben*. Stuttgart: Theiss.
- Prinz, Friedrich. 1971. *Klerus und Krieg im früheren Mittelalter: Untersuchungen zur Rolle der Kirche beim Aufbau der Königsherrschaft*. MGM 2. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann.
- , ed. 1988. *Herrschaft und Kirche: Beiträge zur Entstehung und Wirkungsweise episkopaler und monastischer Organisationsformen*. MGM 33. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann.
- Rauer, Christine. 2000. *Beowulf and the Dragon: Parallels and Analogues*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer.
- Ray, Roger D. 1974. "Medieval Historiography through the Twelfth Century: Problems and Progress of Research". *Viator* 5: 33–59.
- Reichl, Karl. 1992. *Turkic Oral Epic Poetry: Traditions, Forms, Poetic Structure*. Albert Bates Lord Studies in Oral Tradition 7. New York: Garland.
- . 2000. *Singing the Past: Turkic and Medieval Heroic Poetry*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- . 2012a. "Plotting the Map of Medieval Oral Literature". In Reichl, ed. 2012: 3–67.
- , ed. 2012. *Medieval Oral Literature*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Reimitz, Helmut. 2003. "Social Networks and Identities in Frankish Historiography. New Aspects of the Textual History of Gregory of Tours' *Historiae*". In Corradini, Diesenberger and Reimitz, eds 2003: 229–68.
- . 2006. "The Art of Truth: Historiography and Identity in the Frankish World". In Corradini et al., eds 2006: 87–103.
- . 2012. "The Providential Past: Visions of Frankish Identity in the Early Medieval History of Gregory of Tours' *Historiae* (Sixth–Ninth Century)". In Pohl, Gantner and Payne, eds 2012: 109–35.
- . 2013. "Cultural Brokers of a Common Past: History, Identity, and Ethnicity in Merovingian Historiography". In Pohl and Heydemann, eds 2013b: 257–301.
- Remley, Paul G. 2005. "Aldhelm as Old English Poet: *Exodus*, Asser, and the *Dicta Ælfredi*". In O'Brien O'Keefe and Orchard, eds 2005, vol. 1: 90–108.
- Reuter, Timothy. 1985. "Plunder and Tribute in the Carolingian Empire". *TRHS* 5th Series 35: 75–94. [Reprinted in Reuter 2006a: 231–50.]
- . 1990. "The End of Carolingian Military Expansion". In *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious*, Peter Godman and Roger Collins, eds: 391–405. Oxford: Oxford University Press [Reprinted in Reuter 2006a: 251–67.]
- . 1991. *Germany in the Early Middle Ages, 800–1056*. London: Longman.
- . 2006a. *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, Janet L. Nelson, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2006b. "Whose Race, Whose Ethnicity? Recent Medievalists' Discussions of Identity". In Reuter 2006a: 100–8.

- Rexroth, Karl Heinrich. 1978. "Volkssprache und werdendes Volksbewußtsein im ostfränkischen Reich". In *Aspekte der Nationenbildung im Mittelalter*, Helmut Beumann and Werner Schröder, eds: 275–315. Nationes 1. Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag.
- Reydellet, Marc. 1970. "Les intentions idéologiques et politiques dans la chronique d'Isidore de Séville". *Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'École Française de Rome* 82: 363–400.
- . 1981. *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*. BÉFAR 243. Paris: École Française de Rome.
- Reynolds, Susan. 1998. "Our Forefathers? Tribes, Peoples, and Nations in the Historiography of the Age of Migrations". In Murray, ed. 1998: 17–36.
- Riché, Pierre. 1995. *Éducation et culture dans l'Occident barbare VIe–VIIIe siècle*, 4th edn. Paris: Éditions du Seuil.
- Richter, Michael. 1994. *The Formation of the Medieval West: Studies in the Oral Culture of the Barbarians*. Dublin: Four Courts Press.
- Riis, Thomas. 2006. *Einführung in die "Gesta Danorum" des Saxo Grammaticus*. University of Southern Denmark Studies in History and Social Sciences 276. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark.
- Robinson, Fred C. 1985. *"Beowulf" and the Appositive Style*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- . 1997. "Sigemund's *fæhðe ond fyrena*: Beowulf 879a". In *To Explain the Present: Studies in the Changing English Language in Honour of Matti Rissanen*, Terttu Nevalainen and Leena Kahlas-Tarkka, eds: 200–8. Mémoires de la Société néophilologique de Helsinki 52. Helsinki: Société néophilologique.
- Rodríguez Alonso, Cristóbal. 1975 = HG [Introduction and notes].
- Rohrbacher, David. 2002. *The Historians of Late Antiquity*. London: Routledge.
- Rousseau, Philip, ed. 2009. *A Companion to Late Antiquity*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Ruggini, Lellia Cracco. 1997. "Les généraux francs aux IVe–Ve siècles et leurs groupes aristocratiques". In *Clovis: histoire et mémoire*, 2 vols., Michel Rouche, ed.: 2: 673–88. Paris: Presses de l'Université des Paris-Sorbonne.
- von Rummel, Philipp. 2007. *Habitus barbarus: Kleidung und Repräsentation spätantiker Eliten im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert*. ERGA 55. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Sabbah, Guy. 2003. "Ammianus Marcellinus". In Marasco, ed. 2003: 43–84.
- Salway, Peter. 1984. *Roman Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sarti, Laury. 2013. *Perceiving War and the Military in Early Christian Gaul (ca.400–700 A.D.)*. BSEM 22. Leiden: Brill.
- Schaller, Dieter. 1983. "Ist der *Waltharius* frühkarolingisch?" *MlatJb* 18: 63–83.
- . 1989–90. "Von St. Gallen nach Mainz? Zum Verfasserproblem des *Waltharius*". *MlatJb* 24/25: 423–37.

- Scharer, Anton, and Georg Scheibelreiter, eds. 1994. *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*. VIÖG 32. Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Scheibelreiter, Georg. 1999. "Fredegär – Chronist einer Epoche". In *The Medieval Chronicle*, Erik Kooper, ed.: 250–9. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- . 2002. "Gegenwart und Vergangenheit in der Sicht Fredegars". In *The Medieval Chronicle II*, Erik Kooper, ed.: 212–22. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Scheil, Andrew. 2004. *The Footsteps of Israel: Understanding Jews in Anglo-Saxon England*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- . 2008. "The Historiographic Dimensions of *Beowulf*". *JEGP* 107: 281–302.
- Schieffer, Rudolf. 2004. *Neues von der Kaiserkrönung Karls des Großen*. Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 2004/2. Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- . 2006. *Die Karolinger*, 4th edn. KUT 411. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer.
- Schlumberger, Jörg. 1974. *Die Epitome de Caesaribus: Untersuchungen zur heidnischen Geschichtsschreibung des 4. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* Vestigia: Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte 18. Munich: C.H. Beck.
- Schmid, Karl. 1965. "Religiöses und sippengebundenes Gemeinschaftsbewußtsein in frühmittelalterlichen Gedenkbucheinträgen". *DA* 21: 18–81. [Reprinted with the same pagination in Schmid 1983.]
- . 1979. "Das liturgische Gebetsgedenken in seiner historischen Relevanz am Beispiel der Verbrüderungsbewegung des früheren Mittelalters". *Freiburger Diözean-Archiv* 99: 20–44. [Reprinted with the same pagination in Schmid 1983.]
- . 1983. *Gebetsgedenken und adliges Selbstverständnis im Mittelalter: Ausgewählte Beiträge*. Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag.
- Schürr, Diether. 2011. "Hiltibrants Gottvertrauen". *ABäG* 68: 1–25.
- . 2013. "*Sunufatarungo* und die Erfindung des Hilebrandsliedes". *ABäG* 70: 65–86.
- Schwab, Ute. 1972. "*Arbeo laosa*": philologische Studien zum "*Hildebrandslied*". Basler Studien zur deutschen Sprache und Literatur 45. Bern: Francke.
- . 1979. "Nochmals zum ags. *Waldere* neben dem *Waltharius*". *PBB* 101: 229–51; 347–68.
- Schwarcz, Andreas. 2001. "The Visigothic Settlement in Aquitaine: Chronology and Archaeology". In Mathisen and Shanzer, eds 2001: 15–25.
- . 2011. "Visigothic Settlement, *Hospitalitas*, and Army Payment Reconsidered". In Mathisen and Shanzer, eds 2011: 265–70.
- Scragg, Donald G. 2003. "A Reading of *Brunanburh*". In *Unlocking the Wordhoard: Anglo-Saxon Studies in Memory of Edward B. Irving, Jr.*, Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe and Mark C. Amodio, eds: 109–22. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- von See, Klaus. 1967. *Germanische Verskunst*. SM 67. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler.

- . 1989. "Euhemerismus". In *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. 4: 86–92. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler.
- von See, Klaus, Beatrice La Farge, Eve Picard and Katja Schulz. 2000. *Kommentar zu den Liedern der Edda*, vol. 3: *Götterlieder (Völundarkviða, Alvíssmál, Baldrs draumar, Rígsþula, Hyndluljóð, Grottasöngur)*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.
- Sehlmeyer, Markus. 2009. *Geschichtsbilder für Pagane und Christen: "Res Romanae" in den spätantiken Breviarien*. Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 272. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Sievers, Eduard. 1893. *Altgermanische Metrik*. Halle: Niemeyer.
- Simek, Rudolf. 1995. *Lexikon der germanischen Mythologie*, 2nd edn. Kröners Taschenausgabe 368. Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag.
- Sims-Williams, Patrick. 1983a. "Gildas and the Anglo-Saxons". *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 6: 1–30.
- . 1983b "The Settlement of England in Bede and the *Chronicle*". *ASE* 12: 1–41.
- Sisam, Kenneth. 1953. *Studies in the History of Old English Literature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Sivan, Hagith. 1996. "Why not Marry a Barbarian? Marital Frontiers in Late Antiquity (The Example of CTh 3.14.1)". In *Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity*, Ralph W. Mathisen and Hagith Sivan, eds: 136–45. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Smith, Julia M.H. 2005. *Europe after Rome: A New Cultural History 500–1000*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Smith, Christopher J. 2005. "The *Origo gentis Romanae*: Facts and Fiction". *Bulletin of the Institute for Classical Studies* 48: 97–136.
- Soraci, Rosario. 1974. *Ricerche sui conubia tra Romani e germani nei secoli IV–VI*, 2nd edn. Catania: Muglia.
- Souter, Alexander. 1949. *A Glossary of Later Latin to 600 AD*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Sowerby, Richard. 2007. "Hengest and Horsa: The Manipulation of History and Myth from the *Adventus Saxonum* to *Historia Brittonum*". *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies* 51: 1–19.
- Springer, Matthias. 2004. *Die Sachsen*. KUT 598. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer.
- Stanley, Eric. 1963. "*Hæpenra hyht* in *Beowulf*". In *Studies in Old English Literature in Honor of Arthur G. Brodeur*, Stanley B. Greenfield, ed.: 136–51. Eugene, OR: Oregon University Books.
- . 2002. "Paleographical Deep Waters: <a> for <u> and <u> for <a>, <d> for <ð> and <ð> for <d> in Old English". *ANQ* 15: 62–72.
- . 2005. "*Beowulf*: Lordlessness in Ancient Times is the Theme, as Much as the Glory of Kings If Not More". *Notes and Queries* 52: 267–81.
- Stickler, Timo. 2007. "The *Foederati*". In Erdkamp, ed. 2007: 495–514.
- Stone, Rachel. 2013. "*Waltharius* and Carolingian Morality: Satire and Lay Values". *EME* 21: 50–70.

- Strecker, Karl. 1951 [Introduction to *Waltharius*]. In MGH Poet. 6/1: 1–23. Weimar: Böhlau.
- Suerbaum, Werner. 1977. *Vom antiken zum frühmittelalterlichen Staatsbegriff: Über Verwendung und Bedeutung von "res publica", "regnum", "imperium" und "status" von Cicero bis Jordanis*, 3rd edn. Münster: Aschendorff.
- Syme, Ronald. 1968. *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- . 1971. *Emperors and Biography: Studies in the Historia Augusta*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Szarmach, Paul. 1993. "The (Sub-)Genre of *The Battle of Maldon*". In *The Battle of Maldon: Fiction and Fact*, Janet Cooper, ed.: 43–61. London: Hambledon Press.
- Teillet, Suzanne. 1984. *Dès Goths à la nation gothique: les origines de l'idée de nation en Occident du Ve au VIIe siècle*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Thornbury, E.V. 2000. "eald enta geweorc and the Relics of Empire: Revisiting the Dragon's Lair in *Beowulf*". *Quaestio* 1: 82–92.
- Thraede, Klaus. 1966. "Euhemerismus". In *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, vol. 6: 877–90. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann.
- Tolkien, J.R.R. 1936. "*Beowulf*: The Monsters and the Critics". *Proceedings of the British Academy* 22: 245–95.
- Trilling, Renée R. 2009. *The Aesthetics of Nostalgia: Historical Representation in Old English Verse*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Vansina, Jan. 1985. *Oral Tradition as History*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Wagner, Norbert. 1982. "Alboin bei Turisind". *ZfdA* 111: 243–55.
- Wallace-Hadrill, J.M. 1988. *Bede's "Ecclesiastical History of the English People": A Historical Commentary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Ward, John O. 1994. "The Function of the Epic in Latin Culture: The *Waltharius* and Carolingian Attitudes towards Marriage". In *The Epic in History*, Lola Sharon Davidson, S.N. Mukherjee and Z. Zlatar, eds: 64–111. Sydney Studies in Society and Culture 11. Sydney: Sydney Studies.
- Ward-Perkins, Bryan. 2000. "Why Did the Anglo-Saxons Not become More British?". *EHR* 115: 513–33.
- . 2005. *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Weber, Gerd Wolfgang. 1987. "Intellegere historiam: Typological Perspectives of Nordic Prehistory (in Snorri, Saxo, Widukind and Others)". In *Tradition og historieskrivning: kilderne til Nordens ældste historie*, Kirsten Hastrup and Preben Meulengracht Sørensen, eds: 95–141. Acta Jutlandica 63/2. Aarhus: Aarhus universitetsforlag.
- Weidemann, Margarete. 1982. *Kulturgeschichte der Merowingerzeit nach den Werken Gregors von Tours*. 2 vols. Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-germanischen Zentralmuseums.
- Weissensteiner, Johann. 1994. "Cassiodor/Jordanes als Geschichtsschreiber". In Scharer and Scheibelreiter, eds 1994: 308–25.

- Wenskus, Reinhard. 1961. *Stammesbildung und Verfassung: das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes*. Cologne: Böhlau.
- Werner, Karl Ferdinand. 1987. "Gott, Herrscher und Historiograph: Der Geschichtsschreiber als Interpret des Wirken Gottes in der Welt und Ratgeber der Könige (4. bis 12. Jahrhundert)". In *Deus qui movet tempora: Menschen und Institutionen im Wandel des Mittelalters: Festschrift für Alfons Becher zu seinem fünfundsiechzigsten Geburtstag*, Ernst Dieter Hehl, eds: 1–31. Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag.
- Whittaker, C.R. 1994. *Frontiers of the Roman Empire: A Social and Economic Study*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Wickham, Chris. 1981. *Early Medieval Italy: Central Power and Local Society 400–1000*. London: Macmillan.
- . 1998. "Ninth-Century Byzantium through Western Eyes". In *Byzantium in the Ninth Century: Dead or Alive?*, Leslie Brubaker, ed: 245–56. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- . 2005. *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . 2009. *The Inheritance of Rome: A History of Europe from 400 to 1000*. London: Allen Lane.
- . 2012. "Conclusions". In Pohl, Gantner and Payne, eds 2012: 551–5.
- Wiemer, Hans-Ulrich. 2013. 'Die Goten in Italien: Wandlungen und Zerfall einer Gewaltgemeinschaft'. *Historische Zeitschrift* 293: 593–628.
- Winkelmann, Friedhelm. 2003. "Historiography in the Age of Constantine". In Marasco, ed. 2003: 3–41.
- Wisniewski, Roswitha. 1986. *Mittelalterliche Dietrich-Dichtung*. SM 205. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler.
- Wolf, Alois. 1976. "Mittelalterliche Heldensagen zwischen Vergil, Prudentius und raffinierter Klosterliteratur: Beobachtungen zum *Waltharius*". *Sprachkunst* 7: 180–212.
- . 1989. "Volkssprachliche Heldensagen und lateinische Mönchskultur: Grundsätzliche Überlegungen zum *Waltharius*". In *Geistesleben um den Bodensee im frühen Mittelalter*, Achim Masser and Alois Wolf, eds: 157–83. Literatur und Geschichte am Oberrhein 2. Freiburg: Schillinger.
- Wolfram, Herwig. 1971. "The Shaping of the Early Medieval Kingdom". *Viator* 1: 1–21.
- . 1979. *Geschichte der Goten: von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des 6. Jahrhunderts: Entwurf einer historischen Ethnographie*. Munich: C.H. Beck.
- . 1981. "Gothic History and Historical Ethnography". *Journal of Medieval History* 7: 309–19.
- . 1990. *Das Reich und die Germanen: zwischen Antike und Mittelalter*. Berlin: Siedler.
- . 1994. "*Origo et religio*: Ethnic Traditions and Literature in Early Medieval Texts". *EME* 3: 19–38.

- . 1998. "Typen der Ethnogenese – ein Versuch". In Geuenich, ed. 1998: 608–27.
- Wood, Ian N. 1984. "The End of Roman Britain: Continental Evidence and Parallels". In Lapidge and Dumville, eds 1984: 1–25.
- . 1987. "The Fall of the Western Empire and the End of Roman Britain". *Britannia* 18: 251–62.
- . 1990. "Ethnicity and the Ethnogenesis of the Burgundians". In *Typen der Ethnogenese unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Bayern*, Herwig Wolfram and Walter Pohl, eds: 53–69. VKF 12. Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- . 1994a. "Fredegair's Fables". In Scharer and Scheibelreiter, eds 1994: 359–66.
- . 1994b. *The Merovingian Kingdoms 450–751*. London: Longman.
- . 1995. "Defining the Franks: Frankish Origins in Early Medieval Historiography". In *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages*, Simon Forde, Lesley Johnson and Alan V. Murray, eds: 47–57. Leeds Texts and Monographs, New Series 14. Leeds: University of Leeds.
- . 1997. "Before and after the Migration to Britain". In the *Anglo-Saxons from the Migration Period to the Eighth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, John Hines, ed.: 41–54. SHA 2. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.
- . 2003a. "Deconstructing the Merovingian Family". In Corradini, Diesenberger and Reimitz, eds 2003: 148–71.
- . 2003b. "Gentes, Kings and Kingdoms—The Emergence of States: The Kingdom of the Gibichungs". In Goetz, Jarut and Pohl, eds 2003: 243–69.
- . 2008. "Barbarians, Historians, and the Construction of National Identities". *JLA* 1: 61–81.
- . 2011. "The Term 'barbarus' in Fifth-, Sixth-, and Seventh-Century Gaul". *Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik*: 39–50.
- . 2013. *The Modern Origins of the Early Middle Ages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wood, Jamie. 2005. "Heretical Catholics and Catholic Heretics: Isidore of Seville and the Religious History of the Goths". In *From Orosius to the "Historia Silense": Four Essays on the Late Antique and Early Medieval Historiography of the Iberian Peninsula*, David Hook, ed.: 17–50. Bristol: University of Bristol.
- . 2012. *The Politics of Identity in Visigothic Spain: Religion and Power in the Histories of Isidore of Seville*. BSEM 21. Leiden: Brill.
- . 2013. "Religiones and gentes in Isidore of Seville's *Chronica maiora*". In Pohl and Heydemann, eds 2013a: 125–68.
- . 2014. "Suetonius and the *De uita Caesarum* in the Carolingian Empire". In *Suetonius the Biographer: Studies in Roman Lives*, Tristan Power and Roy K. Gibson, eds: 273–91. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Woods, David. 2009. "Late Antique Historiography: A Brief History of Time". In Rousseau, ed. 2009: 357–71.

- Woolf, Greg. 2011. *Tales of the Barbarians: Ethnography and Empire in the Roman West*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Wormald, Patrick. 1978. "Bede, *Beowulf*, and the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxon Aristocracy". In *Bede and Anglo-Saxon England*, Robert T. Farrell, ed.: 32–95. British Archaeological Reports 46. London: British Archaeological Reports.
- . 1983. "Bede, the Bretwaldas, and the Origins of the *Gens Anglorum*". In *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies presented to J.M. Wallace-Hadrill*, Patrick Wormald, Donald A. Bullough and Roger Collins, eds: 99–129. Oxford: Blackwell.
- . 1991. "Anglo-Saxon Society and Its Literature". In Godden and Lapidge, eds 1991: 1–22.
- Wright, Roger. 1982. *Late Latin and Early Romance in Spain and Carolingian France*. Liverpool: Francis Cairns.
- Wright, Roger, ed. 1991. *Latin and the Romance Languages in the Early Middle Ages*. London: Routledge.
- Yorke, Barbara. 2006. *The Conversion of Britain: Religion, Politics and Society in Britain c. 600–800*. Harlow: Pearson Longman.
- Zecchini, Guiseppe. 2003. "Latin Historiography: Jerome, Orosius and the Western Chronicles". In Marasco, ed. 2003: 319–345.
- Zettersten, Arne. 1979 = *Waldere* [Introduction].
- Zink, Michel. 1995. *Medieval French Literature: An Introduction*. Trans. Jeff Rider. Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 110. Binghampton: Centre for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, SUNY Binghampton.
- Ziolkowski, Jan M. 2001. "Fighting Words: Wordplay and Swordplay in the *Waltharius*". In Olsen, Harbus and Hofstra, eds 2001: 29–51.
- . 2008. "Of Arms and the (Ger)man: Literary and Material Culture in the *Waltharius*". In *The Long Morning of Medieval Europe: New Directions in Early Medieval Studies*, Jennifer R. Davis and Michael McCormick, eds: 193–208. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Zotz, Thomas. 1998. "Die Alemannen in der Mitte des 4. Jahrhunderts nach dem Zeugnis des Ammianus Marcellinus". In Geuenich, ed. 1998: 384–406.

Index

The term 'barbarian' occurs too frequently in the text to be included comprehensively in this index, and entries are given only for specific topics in relation to discussion 'barbarians' not otherwise specified with a particular identity; further entries will be found, again with reference only to specific topics, under the headings of the principal barbarian peoples discussed in this book. Page ranges for chapters devoted to the principal narratives examined above are also not given; rather, I provide only references to particular topics, as readers can easily find the pages devoted to those works by consulting the table of contents. Index entries for a selection of modern scholars whose work has been particularly useful or influential provide references only to explicit discussions of their work or citations of particularly important or influential arguments, not to all citations of their scholarship above.

- Ablabius, Ablavius 48n36, 50, 51, 59
 Aeneas 54n63, 101–2, 106n69, 111, 112, 244
Aeneid 46n30, 105n65, 106n69, 110, 160n51, 166, 174, 178
 Agilulf 120, 121, 137, 141–2, 143, 145n115, 145n118, 146, 186n7
 Alahis 145n118
 Alboin (Lombard ruler) 119n15, 120, 121, 123, 124, 128–9, 129–40, 143–4, 146, 149
 grave and sword of 139n94
 interregnum and chaos after death of 145n118, 148, 208–9
 narrative of death of 132–6, 147
 songs about 130–1, 137–9, 234, 251n103
 in *Widsith* 140n97, 226
 Alcuin 215, 229–30, 250m102
 Aldhelm of Malmesbury 177–8n129, 191n23, 246–7
 Alexander the Great 50n47, 50–1n49, 81–2, 100, 105n65, 218, 226, 247, 252, 258n1
 alliteration:
 in Latin texts 119, 129–30, 132–3, 177–8n129
 in vernacular texts 176, 191, 193, 200, 201, 202n88, 249–50
 Amals 43, 45, 47, 48n34, 53, 54, 56–7, 60, 61, 63, 64, 67n112, 90
 Amazons 45, 49n43, 128
 Ammianus Marcellinus 14n31, 30, 32–3, 40, 44n19, 48n36, 54n63, 106–7
 Amory, Patrick 8n15, 10n18, 15n34, 19, 24n52, 41n8, 42n10, 51n50, 53n61, 56n70, 56n72, 67n112, 68n115, 161n55
Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (ASC) 187, 189, 191, 214–15, 216n162, 219
 Anglo-Saxons:
 conversion of 186, 188
 in the *Historia Brittonum* 188–9, 216
 migration of to England 15n35, 184–7, 188, 189, 190, 216, 217, 255
 oral traditions among 186–7, 191–2, 206, 213n149, 216, 225–7, 230–1, 234
 paganism among 186, 188n13, 216
 see also *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (ASC); Bede; *Beowulf*; *Historia Brittonum*
 Anicii 45, 63, 64
 Aquitaine, Aquitainians 41, 45, 48n34, 73, 74, 91n240, 155–6, 158, 161, 162–3, 179, 232
 Arianism 72, 75, 76
 as barbarian attribute 2, 16
 of Burgundians 163–4n64
 conversion to 61–3, 73, 75–6, 141, 164n64
 of Goths 42–3, 61–3, 72, 73, 75–7, 78, 79–80, 85, 92, 141, 163
 of Lombards 141–3, 145m115, 146, 147, 151, 186n7
 of Theoderic the Great 237, 238, 240, 242
 Athanaric (Gothic ruler) 61n89, 73, 74, 75–6, 77n160, 82n193
Atlaqviða 150n50, 171, 173
 see also *Edda* ('*Elder*' or '*Poetic*')
 Attila (Hun) 54n65, 155–7, 159, 161, 162, 163, 171, 172, 173, 180, 239n63
 Audoin (Lombard king) 129–30, 140n97, 226

- Aurelius Victor (historian) 31, 40n2, 93n1,
- Authari (Lombard king) 7, 120, 122, 144,
145–7, 148, 149n131
Arianism of 142n104, 147
wooing of and marriage to Theudelinda
119n15, 120, 121, 136, 137, 138n91, 138n92,
139n97
- Avars 120, 145n118, 158, 161–2n57, 239, 240,
241n75
see also
- in classical antiquity 11n22, 12n24
marriages of with Romans 13–14
Roman conception of, in late antiquity
- as Roman military commanders 13–14
as Roman soldiers 13
see also Anglo-Saxons; Burgundians;
Franks; *Getica*
Historia Gothorum
Historia
Langobardorum, barbarians in; Isidore of
Seville: barbarians, his definition of;
Lombards
- Battle of Châlons 84, 87, 161
see also
- Bede 28, 142, 143n106, 185n5, 189, 222, 238,
240, 242n76
on early Anglo-Saxon history 185, 188,
Historia Ecclesiastica of 29, 30, 185, 187,
- Paul the Deacon's knowledge of 118,
121n27, 141
- Beowulf* 4, 6n13, 9, 137n88, 153, 165n72, 179,
182n145, 223, 227, 229, 234, 257, 258n1,
- and Anglo-Saxon genealogies and
histories 214–17, 218, 219, 256
- dating of 193
Ermanaric in 213, 243
Fight at Finnsburg in 192, 217n167,
224n2
- manuscript context of 193, 214n153, 218
- paganism in 197–200, 201n85, 202–3,
207–8, 210m132, 210n134, 211
problematization of the pagan past in
183, 208–11, 219–21, 255–6, 266n11
and Scandinavian history and mythology
- Sigemund in 194, 203, 204–7, 208n122,
210n133, 213, 215
summary of 193–7
and vernacular biblical verse 201–2,
- Weland/Wieland/Völundr in 174, 213
226
- Bernlef 233
- Boethius 61, 226, 238n54, 240, 242n76
- Braulio 69, 70n122
- Breviarum* of Eutropius, *see* Eutropius; of
Festus, *see* Festus
- bridal-quest narratives 176
- Britons, Trojans origins of 188
- Burgundy, Burgundians 8, 21n45, 22, 24n52,
97, 161, 162, 217, 224, 265
legendary narratives about 160, 161–2,
168n86, 171, 182n145, 214, 226, 236, 248,
- and Lombards 119n15, 122n30
origins of in Scandinavia 244–5
religion of 163–4n64
as Trojans 106–7n71
- Waltharius* 156, 162, 163n64, 174,
176, 179
Poetic
Nibelungenlied
- Caesar, *see*
- Carolingian empire 95, 162n58, 246n89
see also Carolingian Renaissance;
- Carolingian Renaissance 2–3, 256
see also Rome, significance of in early
medieval culture
- Cassiodorus 46, 48, 53–4, 55, 58, 64, 66,
91n241, 239
Variae of 46n30, 53n59, 54n63, 56–8,
- lost Gothic history of 46–8, 49, 53–4, 55,
56, 58–9, 64, 67n112
De origines actibusque Getarum

Châlons, *see* Battle of Châlons

Chansons de geste 235

Charlemagne 1–2, 95, 98, 99, 118, 161–2n57,
169n92, 235, 253, 263
and barbarian songs 1, 231–5
coronation of 1, 256
and Lombard kingdom 116, 117
and statue of Theoderic 1, 228, 236–7,

see also Carolingian empire; Carolingian
Renaissance; Einhard

Chlochilaicus, *see* Hygelac, raid on Franks of
Christensen, Arne Søbø 39n2, 40n3, 42n9,

53n61, 54n63, 54n65, 55, 57n76

Chronicon Novaliciense 175

Cicero 105n66

disapproval of heroic/pagan narratives by
5, 36–8, 151, 182, 215, 218, 220, 222, 229–30,
234–5, 242, 250n102, 256, 259, 264–5
links of with secular aristocracy and
pastimes 4, 36–8, 169, 170, 178, 223, 234,
250n102, 259, 265
see also Alcuin; Theoderic the Great,
negative portrayal of

Clovis (Merovingian king) 94, 96, 99,
101, 102

conversion of 96n13, 101, 103, 142

Collins, Roger 53n57, 69n121, 72, 85n206,
91n240, 97nn18–19

Colonia Ulpia Traiana 101n43, 108n79

conversion to Christianity (Arian or

126–7n49, 142, 222–3, 246–7, 259
of Angles and Saxons 142, 186, 188
of Franks 96, 101, 103, 142
of Goths 42–3n10, 61–2, 73, 75–7, 79, 85,
86, 89n230
of Lombards 126n49, 137, 141–3, 146
see also Arianism; heresy, heretics

Coumert, Magali 42n9, 47n33, 55n67,
83n195, 85n207, 103n57, 105n65, 106n67,
107n71, 109n80, 110n84, 110n85, 114n103,
118–19, 127, 137n85

Cunimund (Gepid king) 120, 129, 130,
132–3

see also skull-cup(s)

De Caesaribus *see* Aurelius Victor; *Epitome de
Caesaribus*

De origine actibusque Getarum (Getica of
Jordanes) 6n13, 8–9, 34, 40, 84n201, 87,
112, 113, 114, 121n27, 150, 151, 161, 163, 188, 190,
213, 217n166, 218n170, 223, 243, 261

Catholic Goths in 42n10, 67

conversion of Goths in 61–2, 75n152,

division of the Goths in 41, 44n19,

Gothic oral tradition (or references
to it) in 46, 50–1, 52, 53, 55, 66, 68
knowledge and/or use of by later
writers 10n19, 17, 23, 125–6, 223n1, 243,
244, 248–9, 263
on the origins of the Goths 44–5, 48–9,
51, 64, 151n136, 243, 244
paganism of the Goths in 60–1
sources of 46–60, 66, 138, 223; *see also*

Theoderic the Great in 61, 64, 65, 68, 87,
88, 91, 237, 239–40, 241
use of Cassiodorus's history in 46–8, 49,
53–4, 55, 56, 66, 91n241
see also Amals; Anicii; Arianism, of Goths;
De summa ... Romanorum
Historia Gothorum; Jordanes;
Theoderic the Great

De summa ... Romanorum (Romanica of
Jordanes) 43–4, 65n107, 89, 118, 244n81
sources of 44n16

Decem libri Historiarum) of Gregory of
Tours, *see* Gregory of Tours, *Histories*

Deor 153, 160, 175, 192, 213, 224, 225–6, 227,
237, 241, 243

Dicineus 49–50n43, 52–3, 81n183

dragon(s):

Beowulf 194, 195–6, 199n74, 202–8, 210,

in hagiographic texts 203–4, 211

Drews, Wolfram 71, 72n138, 74n148, 76n153,
86n213

Dudo of St Quentin, *De moribus ...*

Normanniae ducum 5, 152, 263

ecclesiastical history 2, 4, 29–30, 34, 150

see also *Historia Ecclesiastica*

Gregory of Tours, *Histories of Poetic**) 160n50, 171, 172n102,

173, 174, 212n143

Beowulf; Sigemund in; *Volsunga saga*

Edictum Rothari 122

Edictum Theodorici 53n57

Einhard 1, 2, 146n118, 231–2, 234, 245, 253, 263n4

Ennodius 239

Epic Cycle 105n65

Epitome de Caesaribus

55n66, 92, 213, 217, 224, 225, 226, 233,

Ermoldus Nigellus 235, 243–4, 247

Ethnica of Stephanos Byzantios

ethnicity, ethnic identity, see ethnogenesis;

ethnography, Greek and Roman traditions

of; identity, concepts of; Germanic culture

ethnogenesis 18–22, 24

ethnography, Greek and Roman

traditions of 2, 44n17, 137n85, 259

Etymologies of Isidore of Seville, see Isidore of *Etymologiae*

Eusebius–Jerome chronicle 27–8, 31, 44n16,

69, 70, 74, 90, 98

Eutropius 30, 31, 34, 40n2, 44n16, 117, 118,

125n43, 136, 150n134, 185n5

Excerpta Valesiana 238, 239

Exeter Book 225–7

Faramund 102, 107

Festus (historian) 31, 34, 44n16

Fight at Finnsburg 192, 217n167, 224, 229

flyting 129, 157, 160, 194

foederati 13, 41, 56, 83, 93, 185, 186n6

Frank, Roberta 8n14, 17n39, 192n27, 234n42,

Franks:

Beowulf

conversion of 96, 103, 142

in Isidore's *Historia Gothorum*

73, 85n207

migration of through or from

Pannonia 96, 102, 103, 104, 107, 108n79

paganism among 96, 103

in Paul the Deacon's *Historia*

Langobardorum 119n15, 120, 122n30, 140

as Roman military commanders and

foederati 14n31, 93, 186

Trojan origins of 98, 99–104, 110n86,

140n99, 141n102, 150, 151, 181n137; see

Hagano, Trojan origins of

Scandinavian origins of 113, 114, 243–4,

sources for Trojan origin myth of 105–10

see also Carolingian Empire; Charlemagne;

Clovis; Fredegar (chronicle); Gregory,

Bishop of Tours; *Liber Historiae*

Francorum Waltharius

Freculph of Lisieux 263, 244, 245, 247

Fredegar (chronicle) 4, 141, 150, 190

Alboin in 124, 135

on Frankish origins 98, 99–101, 103–4,

knowledge of and references to Virgil in

knowledge and/or use of by later writers

10, 28, 34, 114, 223n1

on Lombard origins 113, 117, 122–3, 124,

sources of 97–8, 99, 101, 105n65, 107–10,

135n79

on Theoderic the Great 98, 114, 160, 237,

239, 241

see also Franks, Trojan origins of; Greek

sources: of Fredegar; Gregory, Bishop of

Tours, use of by Fredegar

Frisia, Frisians 185, 186n6, 194, 196n56, 217,

232, 246

Gepids 45, 62, 120, 128, 129–30, 136, 149n133

Germanic culture and identity 7–9, 16, 17,

21–3, 25, 114, 154, 227, 242–3, 246–9,

251–5, 257, 263

see also ethnogenesis; identity,

concepts of; Germanic vernaculars,

relatedness of

Germanic vernaculars, relatedness of

8, 9n16, 16, 21, 114, 130–1, 137, 138, 224,

- 236, 243, 245–7, 248, 249–50, 251–5, 256, 258, 262, 263
- Gesta Danorum*, see Saxo Grammaticus
- Getae 40, 49–50, 73, 82n187
- Getica*, see *De origine actibusque Getarum*
- Gildas 186n6, 187–8, 189
- Goetz, Hans-Werner 12n24, 20n44, 25n54, 28n61, 94n4, 11n89, 259, 264n8
- Goffart, Walter 15, 17, 18, 20, 21n46, 99, 192n27, 240n66, 248, 249
- on Jordanes 42n9, 47n33, 49n42, 52, 54n65, 55n66, 57–8, 67n112, 88n229
- on Paul the Deacon 134n73, 138n92, 140n98, 142–3n106, 145n115
- Gog and Magog 73, 82m187, 83
- Goths:
- Arianism among 42–3, 61–3, 72, 73, 75–7, 78, 79–80, 85, 92, 141, 163
- Catholicism among, in the fourth century 42n10, 76, 77, 80
- confusion of with Scythians 39–40, 44–5, 49–50, 51
- conversion of 42–3n10, 61–2, 73, 75–7, 79, 85, 86, 89n230
- descent of from Scythians 71, 73n139, 83
- division of as Ostrogoths and Visigoths 41, 44n19, 45, 51n49
- laws of 41n8, 52–3, 76, 78, 85, 87n222, 90, 91
- narratives about in Anglo-Saxon England 242n76, 243, 247, 251, 254; see also *Deor*; *Widsith*
- narratives about in Carolingian Francia 228, 233, 236–43, 244, 245, 248, 250
- oral traditions of 46, 47, 50–1, 52, 52, 53, 55, 56–8, 59, 66, 68, 88
- origins of 44–5, 48–9, 51, 54, 55, 56–7, 59, 63–4, 71, 73, 83, 89, 92, 122, 125, 151n136, 243–4, 248
- as Roman military commanders or *foederati* 14n31, 41, 56, 67n112, 83, 93, 186
- sack of Rome by 41, 73, 77–8, 83–4, 239
- settlement of in Aquitaine and Spain 41, 43n10, 45, 73, 74, 91n240
- settlement of in Italy 41, 45
- see also Amals; Battle of Châlons; Cassiodorus; *De origine actibusque getarum*; Greutungi and Tervingi; *Historia Gothorum*; Theoderic the Great
- Gregory, Bishop of Tours 95, 142, 161, 201n85, 238
- on Burgundians and their religion 163–4n64
- Histories (DLH)* of 29–30, 93, 95–7, 103, 106n67, 111, 113, 121n27, 136n81, 161n54, 161–2n57, 173, 188, 214n152
- life of 29
- on Lombard history 122n30, 135, 143n107, 144n114
- on the origins of the Merovingians 96, 101n44, 104–5, 107, 108
- sources of 104, 108
- use of *Histories* of by Fredegar 97, 98, 99, 101, 135n79
- use of *Histories* of by the *LHF* 97, 99, 102–3
- use of *Histories* of by Paul the Deacon 118, 121n27, 141, 144n114
- on Visigothic history 79n176, 161
- Gregory the Great (pope) 79n176, 118n11, 121n27, 126n49, 141n101, 142n104, 146, 238, 240, 241
- Greek sources:
- of Fredegar 105n65, 107
- of Jordanes 46, 47, 48, 50, 56, 60, 66
- Grendel 194, 195, 197, 198, 199n70, 199n74, 202, 204, 205, 209, 210n132
- Greutungi and Tervingi 44n19
- Gundicharius (Burgundian king) 161
- see also *Waltharius*
- Gutones, Gotones 40
- Hagano:
- in Germanic heroic tradition 171
- as Sicambrian 181n37
- Trojan origins of 156, 179n131, 181n137
- see also *Waltharius*
- hairstyles, hair 15n34, 53, 122, 123–4, 125
- haliurunnae 54
- Halsall, Guy 8n15, 11n21, 15n34, 20n44, 21n46, 24n52, 186n6, 220n182
- Harris, Joseph 8n14, 177, 195n48, 200n79, 207n121, 220n181, 228n14, 234n40
- Haubrichs, Wolfgang 3n8, 128n55, 231n28, 232n31, 253n106
- Haug, Walter 8n14, 192n27
- Heather, Peter 11n21, 15n36, 21n46, 44n17, 67n112, 68n115

- Heimskringla* 172, 212n143, 214n152
Heliand 202n87, 233
Hengest 189, 216, 217, 218, 224n2, 255
heresy, heretics 26, 36, 63, 71, 75–8, 80, 95,
141n103, 238, 240, 242
see also Arianism
Hermenigild (Visigothic prince, revolt of)
79
heroic age, concept of 7–8, 21, 23
heroism, heroic ethos 183, 208, 209n128, 210,
211, 219, 220, 227, 250, 252, 254, 261–2
heroic poetry, *see* legendary narratives
Herules 45, 49n42, 52, 124, 128
Heusler, Andreas 7–8n14, 192n27, 234n40
Hildebrandslied 153, 160, 172, 224, 225n6,
228, 231, 237, 239, 241, 242n77, 252
Hillgarth, J. N. 70n122, 79n177, 85n203,
85n206, 85n211, 90, 91n240, 92n243
Historia Augusta 30, 32, 34, 40n3
Historia Brittonum (*Hist. Brit.*) 5, 187,
188–9, 216
Historia Ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum
of Bede, *see* Bede
Historia Gothorum of Isidore of Seville (*HG*)
29, 34, 39, 41, 112, 113, 114, 119, 141, 142,
150, 151, 188, 190, 237, 259
Arians and Arianism in 72, 73, 75–8, 79,
80, 83, 85, 141
barbarians in 81, 83
Catholic Goths in 73, 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 86
conversion of Goths in 73, 75–6, 79, 141, 142
Laus Spaniae in 72, 73, 82n191, 86
origins of the Goths in 71, 73, 83, 89, 151n136
Ostrogoths in 85n207
persecution of Catholics in 78, 83
Recapitulatio of 73, 82, 86
revolt of Hermenigild in 79
sack of Rome in 73, 77–8, 83–4
sources of 72, 74
summary of 73
Theoderic the Great in 85n206, 87, 237
versions of 72
‘virtus’ of Goths in 80n180, 81–4
Historia Langobardorum of Paul the
Deacon (*HL*) 4, 6, 8–9, 10, 16, 92, 154, 188,
190, 208, 209n128, 217n166, 223n1, 245,
251n103, 256, 260, 263
Arianism in 141–3, 156
audience of 118–19, 138n89
barbarians in 145n118
Bavarians in 119n15, 120, 131, 138, 139n97,
234, 251n103
conversion of Lombards in 137, 141–2
evidence of Lombard vernacular in 127,
138
Franks in 119n15, 120, 122n30, 140,
141n102, 150
legendary narrative in 119n15, 129–33,
136–8, 139–40
Lombard paganism in 141–2
naming of Lombards in 122, 123–4, 125
oral tradition in 121, 131, 137–8
on the origins of the Franks 110n85, 150–1
on the origins of the Lombards 119, 120,
124–6, 127, 128, 137n85, 151, 152, 243
Romans in 144–50
Saxons in 119n15, 120, 130–1, 139n97,
149n133, 150n134
settlement of Lombards in Italy in 116,
120, 123, 143, 144, 147–8
sources of 118, 121n27, 125–7, 134–6,
137–40, 141, 151, 223–4
style of 119, 129, 130n64, 136–7
summary of 119–21
use of verse in 119
Wodan in 125
see also Alboin; Fredegar (chronicle),
Alboin in; Fredegar (chronicle), on
Lombard origins; Gregory, bishop of Tours,
on Lombard history; Lombards; *Orig-*
gentis Langobardorum; Paul the Deacon;
skull-cup(s)
Historia Langobardorum codicis Gothani 118
Historia Normannorum, *see* Dudo of St
Quentin, *De moribus ... Normannie ducum*
Historia Romana (of Paul the Deacon) 31,
117–18, 125n43, 136, 141n103, 150n134, 161,
171n98, 238
Historia Wandalorum (of Isidore of Seville)
70n122, 83
Histories (*dth*) of Gregory of Tours, *see*
Gregory of Tours, *Histories* of
Horsa, *see* Hengest
Hrabanus Maurus 238
Huns 45, 54, 55n66, 61, 64, 73, 84, 87, 122, 123,
155–7, 158n35, 160n50, 161–2, 165n71, 171,
173, 176, 180, 217, 239n63, 247, 252
see also Avars

- Hydatius (chronicler) 72, 74n148, 84n201, 161n55, 163n61
- Hygelac, raid on Franks of 214
- identity, concepts of 3, 8–9, 10n18, 12–13, 14, 16–17, 24–6, 153–4, 179, 180, 247, 249, 257, 258–2, 264, 266
- in Bede 188n13
- of Burgundians 161n55, 162n58
- in Fredegar, Gregory of Tours, and the LHF 94, 96, 99, 111n89
- in Gildas 188n12
- in Gothic histories of Jordanes and Isidore 41n7, 65–8, 80, 86, 88, 89–92
- in Paul the Deacon's *HL* 118nn11–12, 131, 149–50
- see also ethnogenesis; Germanic culture and identity; Germanic languages, relatedness of
- imitatio imperii 86, 88
- see also translatio imperii
- Ingeld 215, 226, 230
- Isidore, Bishop of Seville 4, 34, 36, 90–2, 127, 150, 151
- barbarians, his definition of 81n83, 86n212
- concept of kingship of 69
- chronicles of 28, 70–1, 89, 121n27
- Etymologiae* of 69, 70n122, 71, 73n139, 74n149, 81n83, 86n212, 105n65, 107n72, 121n27, 127n54, 245n89
- on Franks and their name 107
- life and works of 69–70
- see also *Historia Gothorum*; *Historia Wandalorum*
- John of Biclar (chronicler) 74n148, 79, 89n230, 135
- Jordanes, life and works of 43–4
- see also *De origine actibusque Getarum*; *De summa ... Romanorum*
- Julius Caesar 45, 50n47, 73, 81–2, 105n66, 127n53, 189, 226, 247, 252
- Justinian (Roman emperor) 41, 45, 63, 68, 87, 98, 116, 130
- kingship, concepts of 69, 80, 87, 92, 118, 147, 170, 209–10, 220, 261, 263
- Kratz, Dennis M. 165n73, 166–9
- Langobardic (Lombard vernacular) 127, 128, 138, 139, 145–6nn18
- last rites 198, 199, 218
- legendary narratives 4n9, 6n13, 22, 92, 152, 233, 236, 243, 247, 249, 250–1, 252, 254, 255, 256, 258, 260, 261
- and *Beowulf* 192, 193, 206, 212–14, 215, 217, 224
- in Fredegar 98, 99, 101, 114
- in Jordanes's *Getica* 44–5, 50–2, 54–5, 59
- in the *Liber Historiae Francorum* 101, 103
- in Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* 119, 120, 121, 125, 127, 128, 129–40, 151
- on Theoderic the Great 98, 114, 225n6, 236, 239n63, 242–3, 260
- transmission of 224, 249–51
- and *Waltharius* and *Waldere* 159–63, 171, 174, 175, 176, 177n128, 178–9, 182n145, 224
- see also Ermanaric; ethnogenesis; Germanic culture and identity; Germanic vernaculars, relatedness of; heroic age, concept of; heroism, heroic ethos; oral tradition; Theoderic the Great; Traditionskern
- Leovigild (Visigothic king) 73, 74n149, 78–9, 80, 85, 86
- Libanios 107
- Liber de Caesaribus* of Sextus Aurelius Victor, see Aurelius Victor
- Liber Historiae Francorum* (LHF) 4, 10, 30n66, 34, 141, 150, 188, 190, 223n1
- authorship of 98–9
- on Frankish origins 101–4, 111, 244
- sources of 97, 99, 102–3, 107, 108
- summary of 99
- see also Franks, Trojan origins of
- Liber pontificalis* 116, 121n27, 123, 238, 239
- Lombardic, see Langobardic
- Lombards:
- Arianism among 141–3, 145nn15, 146, 147, 151, 186n7
- Catholicism among 121
- conquest of or entry into Italy by 116, 120, 123, 143, 144, 147–8, 186n6
- conversion of 137, 141–2
- language of, see Langobardic

- Lombards (cont.)
 laws of 120
 oral tradition among 121, 125n42, 128
 origins of 119, 120, 121–3, 124–6, 127, 128, 137n85, 151, 152, 243
 paganism of 126n49, 141–2
see also: Gregory of Tours: on Lombard history; *Historia Langobardorum*; *Origo gentis Langobardorum*; Paul the Deacon; Fredegar, Alboin in; Fredegar, on Lombard origins; Winnili, Winniles; Wodan
Ludwigslied 232n30, 234
- Macedonian origins:
 of Franks 100, 103, 105n65, 110n86, 112, 239, 240, 242, 244n82, 252
 of Saxons 152
 of Theoderic the Great 114, 237, 239, 240–1, 242, 252, 263, 264
see also Alexander the Great
- Magog, *see* Gog and Magog
- Marcomer 101, 102, 107–8
- Marius of Avenches (chronicler) 135
- Maskarinec, Maya 141n03, 146n19, 149n130, 150n134
- Mathisen, Ralph W. 11n22, 12, 13n27, 15n34, 43n10, 77n160
- Maximin (Roman emperor of Gothic origin) 81n83, 88
- Maximus of Saragossa (historian) 72, 74n148
- Merovech 96, 101, 102
- Merrills, Andrew 48n39, 49n42, 67n112, 70n122–3, 86
- moustaches, *see* hairstyles, hair
- Murray, Alexander Callander 18n41, 95n11, 101n45, 106
- Narses (Roman general) 116, 120, 123, 143, 146, 147–8
- Neidorf, Leonard 192n27, 193n29, 213n149, 246–7, 251–3
- Nibelungenlied* 162, 168n86, 171, 172, 206, 213
- Notker 23n48, 235, 238
- Nostoi 105n65
- Odoacer 225n6, 228, 239, 241–2
- Odin, Óðinn, *see* Wodan
- Offa of Angel 215, 217n166, 226
- Ogier of Denmark 235
- Óláfr Tryggvason, saga of 172
- oral reports or source material (informal) 4, 20–1, 22–3, 51–2, 55, 56, 59, 74, 109, 110, 120, 126–7, 128, 137–40, 151, 176, 177, 222, 248
- oral tradition (or lack thereof) 4, 17, 18, 22–3, 136n81, 137–8, 153 154, 162n59, 170–5, 177, 241, 243, 248–51, 253–4, 255, 259
- among Anglo-Saxons 192n27, 212, 214, 216,
 among Franks 109, 114n103,
 among Goths 47, 50–1, 52, 53, 54n65, 55, 56–8, 59, 66, 68, 74n149, 88
 among Lombards 115, 121, 125n42, 127, 128, 129n63, 131, 134, 136n81, 137, 139, 140
see also ethnogenesis; Germanic culture and identity; Germanic vernaculars, relatedness of; legendary narratives; heroic age, concept of; Traditionskern
- Orchard, Andy 177–8n129, 191n26, 193n30, 195n49, 201n84, 202nn86–7, 204n98, 204n100, 204n103, 205–6, 209, 210, 214n153, 218n171
- origins, *see* Anglo-Saxons, migration of to England; Burgundy, Burgundians, origins of in Scandinavia; Franks, migration through or from Pannonia; Franks, Trojan origins of; Franks, Scandinavian origins of; Goths, origins of; Lombards, origins of; Macedonian origins; Scandinavia, origins in
- Origo gentis Langobardorum* (*ogL*) 116n3, 117, 217n166, 243
 on Alboin and Rosamund 124
 origins and naming of the Lombards in 122, 123–4
 and Paul the Deacon's *HL* 121n27
see also *Historia Langobardorum*; Lombards; Paul the Deacon; Scandinavia, origins in; Wodan
- Origo gentis Romanae* 30, 33–4
- Orosius 12n23, 27, 28–9, 31, 40nn3–4, 49n43, 50n47, 66n111, 90, 163n64, 239n62, 242n76
 use of by Isidore 74n148, 75n150, 75–6n152, 78n165, 82–3, 90
 use of by Jordanes 44n16, 48, 49n43, 61n88, 62n92, 63
 use of by Paul the Deacon 118, 127

- Panegyrici latini* (*Pan. lat.*):
 on Franks 93n1, 94, 105n66
 on Goths 40n2
 pan-Germanic identity, *see* Germanic culture and identity
 Pannonia, *see* Franks, migration of through or from Pannonia
 Paul the Deacon:
 use of Bede by 1118
 use of Gregory of Tours by 118
 life and ancestors of 117, 120, 138nn91–2
 works of 117–18
 see also Historia Langobardorum; Historia Romana
 Pliny 40n3, 53n60, 121n27, 125, 127n53, 138n90, 140
 Poeta Saxo 162n57, 163n63, 232nn30–1, 233–4, 235
 Pohl, Walter 17n40, 18n41, 19–20, 121n27, 138n93, 139n96, 149n131
 praise-poetry (vernacular), Preislid/
 Zeitgedicht 130–1, 137–9, 139n97, 232n30, 234, 250, 251n103
 Priam 100, 102, 103, 105n65, 107
 Pride 194–5, 220
 Procopius 49n42, 52, 116, 117n8, 126n49, 127
 Prosper of Aquitaine (chronicler), and continuator 72, 74n148, 121n27, 135, 161n55
 Prudentius, *see Waltharius*
 Ptolemy 40n3, 49, 115n1, 126n47, 185n5,

 Radagaisus (Gothic leader) 77–8, 81
 Ravenna Cosmographer 101n43, 108n79
 Reccared (Visigothic king) 73, 78–9, 85n211, 86, 142
 Reichl, Karl 8n14, 23n48, 56n69, 192n28, 249n99
 Renatus Profuturus Frigeridus (historian) 104
Rerum gestarum saxoniarum libri tres, *see* Widukind of Corvey
 Reydellet, Marc 47n33, 64nn99–100, 69n119, 70n122, 71n129, 78–9n171, 85nn210–11, 89n232, 90n239
 Robinson, Fred C. 195n41, 197n67, 199n74, 200–1n82, 203n92, 205n111, 207n121, 208n123, 210n137, 211n139, 220n179

 Rodolphus (Herule king), *see* Roduulf (king of the Ranii)
 Roduulf (king of the Ranii) 49
Romana (of Jordanes), *see De summa ... Romanorum*
Romana (of Paul the Deacon), *see Historia Romana*
 Romance languages, legendary or historical narratives in 174–5, 177, 224, 235, 236, 250, 254, 261
 Rome, significance of in early medieval culture 1–2, 15, 89, 110–11, 113, 188, 189n16, 190n22, 264, 265
 see also Carolingian Renaissance; Britons, Trojan origins of; Franks, narrative of Trojan origins of; Franks, sources for Trojan origin myth of; Hagano, Trojan origins of
 Rosamund (Lombard queen) 124, 130, 132–3, 135–6, 147n123
 Rothari (Lombard king) 120, 138n90, 142–3, 146

 sacral kingship 101n45
 salvation history 28–9, 30, 34, 35, 63, 71n129, 76–8, 83n195, 90, 92, 99, 261
 Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum* of 6, 212n143, 215
 Scandinavia, origins in 44, 92, 243, 248, 253, 255, 256, 259, 261, 263–4
 of the Burgundians 244–5
 of the Franks 113, 114, 243–4, 247
 of the Goths 44, 48–9, 52, 54, 64, 66, 67n112, 151n136, 89, 243
 of the Lombards 119, 120, 121–3, 124–6, 127, 128, 137n85, 151, 152, 243
 see also Scandza, Skandia, Scanza
 Scandza/Skandia/Scanza 44, 48–9, 52, 54, 64, 244, *see also* Scandinavia, origins in
 Scyld Scefing 194, 197, 198, 212
 Scythia, Scythians, *see* Goths, confusion of with Scythians; Goths, descent of from Scythians
 Secundus of Trento (historian) 121n27, 138n90
 ship-burial(s) 198
 Sicambri, Sigambri, Sicambria, Sigambria 102, 107, 108n79, 181n37
 Sidonius Apollinaris 106

- Sigemund, Sigmundr, Siegfried, Sigurðr, *see* *Beowulf*; Sigemund in; *Völsunga saga*
 single combat 157, 160n51, 172, 239
 Sisebut (Visigothic king) 69, 84n202
 skull-cup(s) 129, 130–4, 139, 144, 147n123
 Stephanos Byzantios, *Ethnica* 105n65
 Stilicho (general) 108
 Stone, Rachel 165n73, 166n76, 168n90,
 169nn91–2, 170n96, 178, 180n134, 182
 Suetonius 1, 231
 Sunno 101, 102, 107–8
 Sulpicius Alexander (historian) 104, 108
 Symmachus 61, 238nn54–5, 240
- Tacitus 33, 40n3, 55n67, 106n66, 115n1,
 126n47, 127n53, 185n5, 231, 233n34
 Tervingi, *see* Greutungi and Tervingi
 Teillet, Suzanne 40nn3–4, 50n46, 64nn101–
 4, 65n106, 65n110, 71n129, 80n180,
 82n188, 82n192, 84n199, 84n201, 88n229,
 89n230, 91n240
 Theudelinda (Lombard queen) 120, 121, 136,
 137, 141–3, 146
 Theoderic the Great (Ostrogothic king) 1,
 41, 46, 47, 53n57, 91, 143, 224, 236–7, 243,
 248, 252, 263–4
 Arianism of 43n10, 237, 242n77
 in Carolingian Latin texts 237, 238, 240
 as described by Gregory the Great 238
 in the *Excerpta Valesiana* 238, 239
 in Fregedar 98, 114, 160, 237, 239
 in Gregory of Tours's writings 238
 in Isidore's *Historia Gothorum* 85n207,
 87, 237
 in Jordanes's *De origine actibusque*
Getarum 43, 45, 49, 61, 64, 65, 68, 87, 88,
 237, 239–40, 241
 in Jordanes's *Romana* 43
 in the *Liber pontificalis* 238, 239
 negative portrayal of 237, 238, 240, 241,
 242n77
 positive portrayal of 239
 statue of 1, 228, 236–7, 240, 241, 242
 in vernacular texts and legendary
 narratives 92, 114, 159–60, 177n128, 225–6,
 228, 236, 237, 239, 241–2, 260
 Theoderic (Visigothic king) 163
 Theopompus 105n65
 Theodosius (Roman emperor) 61n89, 82
- Traditionskern 19–20, 259
 translatio imperii 28, 85–6, 88, 89, 92, 113
see also imitatio imperii
 Troy, Trojans, *see* Britons, Trojan origins of;
 Franks, narrative of Trojan origins of;
 Franks, sources for Trojan origin myth of;
 Hagano, Trojan origins of
 Troy, city on the Rhine called 101n43,
 108n79
 Turisind (Gepid king) 121, 128, 129–30
 Turismod (Gepid prince) 129–30
- Ulfila, Gothic bishop 42n10, 62n91, 76
 universal histories / world chronicles
 4, 27–9, 34, 244
- Valens (Roman emperor) 41, 42n10, 61–3, 73,
 75–6
 Vallia (Visigothic king) 73, 162–3
 Vandals 15n34, 45, 70, 83, 123, 124, 125
see also *Historia Wandalorum*
Variae of Cassiodorus, *see* Cassiodorus,
Variae of
 Virgil, *see* *Aeneid*
Vita Fulgentii 239
Vita Caesarii 239
Vita Karoli magni (of Einhard), *see* Einhard
Völsunga saga 206, 213
see also *Beowulf*; Sigemund in; *Edda*
 ('Elder' or 'Poetic')
 Vortigern 186n6, 189
- Walahfrid Strabo 237, 240, 245
 Waldere (I and II) 176–8
 description and summary of 155, 159–60
 Waltharius 4, 9, 29, 199n74, 202n88, 203n93,
 212, 213, 214, 218, 219, 220, 223, 229, 234,
 239n63, 252, 260, 261, 264
 audience of 155, 162, 167, 168, 171, 173, 176,
 178, 182
 authorship of 155
 avarice in 167–8, 170
 dating of 155
 dependence of on *Aeneid* 166, 173–4, 177,
 202n88
 and Germanic oral tradition 170–7
 and other vernacular legends 161–3,
 174–5
 preface of 181–2

- and Prudentius 155, 157n26, 166, 177, 178
 summary of 155–9
superbia in 164–5, 170, 199n74
- Weland, Wieland, Völundr 159–60, 174, 175,
 213, 225, 226, 241
- Wenskus, Reinhard 18–19
- Widia 159, 241
- Widsith* 21, 153–4, 192, 217n166, 224, 225n3,
 226–8, 242n76, 243, 258, 261
 as expression of “pan-Germanic identity”
 227, 251–5
- Greek and Roman figures in 21, 153–4,
 226, 226, 247, 258, 261
- Lombards in 140n97, 213, 217n168, 226
- Theoderic the Great in 160, 226, 237,
 241,
- Widukind of Corvey 5, 152, 263
- Wiglaf 195, 196, 210, 219n175
- Winnili, Winniles 120, 123–5
- Wir-Gefühl 255, 258
see also identity, concepts of
- Wodan/Woden/Wotan/Oðinn 122–7,
 137n85, 138, 215, 216, 218
- Wolfram, Herwig 17n40, 18–19, 54n63
- Wood, Ian N. 12n24, 18n41, 19, 101n45,
 106–7n71
- Wood, Jamie 69n120, 70n122, 70n124, 71n128,
 72nn136–8, 75, 76, 77, 78, 80n179,
 85n205, 89n231, 90n234
- Wormald, Patrick 211n140, 220n183,
 229nn20–1, 230, 242n77, 250n102,
 264n6, 265n7, 265n9
- Zeno 41, 65, 88

